

cigar aficionado

THE GOOD LIFE MAGAZINE FOR MEN

www.cigaraficionado.com

**PEBBLE
BEACH**
A LEGEND
TURNS 100

SOARING DEMAND FOR
**COLLECTIBLE
BOURBON**

PAUL GIAMATTI
STARS IN
BILLIONS

PARTY AT THE
HARD ROCK

80 REVIEWS

**CIGAR
BUYING
GUIDE**

— PLUS —
BEST BUYS

DISCOVER



BACARDÍ
DO WHAT MOVES YOU

Facundo Bacardí

**AGED
8 YEARS
UNDER THE
CARIBBEAN
SUN**

BACARDÍ®

DO WHAT MOVES YOU

BACARDI Y C^{IA}
RESERVA OCHO
RARE GOLD RUM

AGED
8
YEARS

Based on the original recipe from the family reserve created in 1862, BACARDÍ Reserva Ocho is barrel-aged for a minimum of eight years with a rich, velvety body best enjoyed neat, on the rocks or in an Ocho Old Fashioned. BACARDÍ Reserva Ocho has a rich golden color and has warming notes of butterscotch, nutmeg and dried apricots. The longer aging process sparks an additional layer of complex flavors from the barrel.



LIVE PASSIONATELY. DRINK RESPONSIBLY.
© 2019. BACARDI AND THE BAT DEVICE ARE TRADEMARKS OF BACARDI AND COMPANY LIMITED. RUM - 40% ALC. BY VOL.

**AGED
8 YEARS
UNDER THE
CARIBBEAN
SUN**

BACARDÍ
DO WHAT MOVES YOU

A detailed advertisement for Rocky Patel's Olde World Reserve cigars. The central focus is a large, thick cigar with two gold bands; the top band reads 'Olde World Reserve' and 'Rocky Patel' with a logo, and the bottom band reads 'COROJO'. The cigar is positioned diagonally across the frame. In the background, a crystal decanter with a faceted stopper is partially visible, with wisps of smoke rising from it. To the right, a snifter glass is filled with amber-colored liquid, also emitting smoke. Behind the glass, a large, ornate knife with a dark wooden handle and a silver blade stands upright. To the right of the knife, there is a stack of old, thick books and a rolled-up scroll. The entire scene is set against a dark, moody background with a vintage map visible in the upper left and bottom right corners. The map in the bottom right shows the word 'AMERICA'. The overall atmosphere is one of classic luxury and craftsmanship.

Rocky  Patel

Olde World Reserve

- COROJO & MADURO -

HONDURAS

WWW.ROCKYPATEL.COM



Rocky  Patel

Olde World Reserve

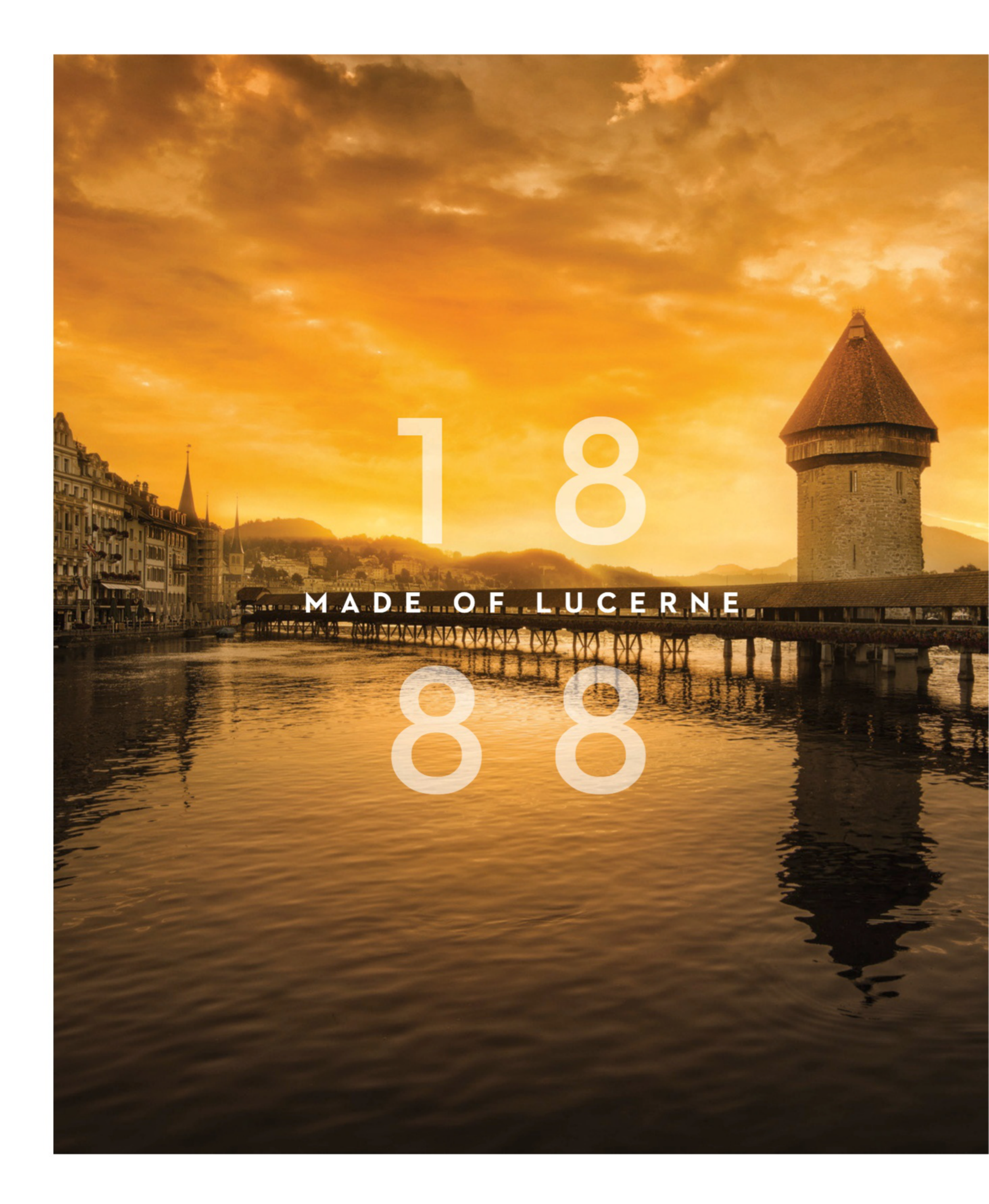
MADURO

NICARAGUA

Olde World Reserve

Rocky Patel

MADURO



18

MADE OF LUCERNE

88



CARL F. BUCHERER

LUCERNE 1888



MANERO FLYBACK
AUTOMATIC | STAINLESS STEEL

carl-f-bucherer.com

MY FATHER

La
Opulencia

TORO

NUMBER

2

cigar

aficionado

TOP 25

CIGARS OF 2018



"THE ART, TRADITION, AND STYLE OF CUBA."



my

With knowledge

And our readers
have a thirst for both.



Wine Spectator



Whisky
ADVOCATE

comes enjoyment.



cigar
aficionado

Magazines for people who are passionate.

TO SUBSCRIBE: **goodlife.mshanken.com**

PUBLICATIONS OF M. SHANKEN COMMUNICATIONS, INC.

J.C. NEWMAN CIGAR Co.®

AMERICA'S OLDEST FAMILY-OWNED PREMIUM CIGAR MAKER
FOUR GENERATIONS AND 124 YEARS OF TRADITION SINCE 1895



WWW.JCNEWMAN.COM

ERIC NEWMAN
Third Generation



DREW NEWMAN
Fourth Generation

BOBBY NEWMAN
Third Generation

Eric, Drew, and Bobby Newman are standing on the rooftop of El Reloj, J.C. Newman's 109-year-old cigar factory in the Ybor City National Historic Landmark District in Tampa, Florida.

JOHNNIE WALKER BLUE LABEL GHOST & RARE PORT ELLEN

Our rarest whiskies reawakened.



JOHNNIE WALKER
Keep Walking

PLEASE DRINK RESPONSIBLY.
JOHNNIE WALKER BLUE LABEL Blended Scotch Whisky. 43.8% Alc/Vol.
©2019 Imported by Diageo, Norwalk, CT

contents

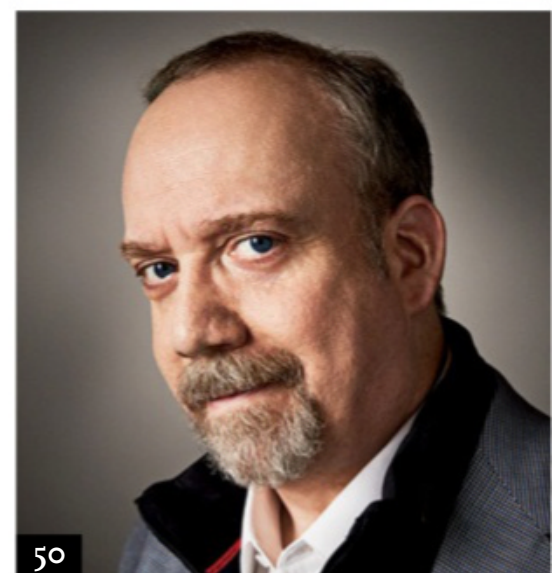
may/june 2019

up front

- 16** CIGAR HIGHLIGHTS
- 19** EDITORS' NOTE
- letters **21** OUT OF THE HUMIDOR
- 26** ELS FOR AUTISM
The CIGAR AFICIONADO-sponsored charity golf tournament added another \$1 million to the cause.
- the best **29** THE GOOD LIFE GUIDE
- 30** PLACES A Swiss cigar haven fit for three kings.
- 33** STYLE Stefano Ricci's blue heaven for spring and summer.
- 36** WHEELS BMW fills the SUV gap in the 7-series.
- 38** TIME The salmon watch comes home to spawn.
- 41** CIGARS An ashtray with the Midas touch.
- 43** DRINK An agave shortage isn't keeping Tequila down.
- 45** SPORT Today's golf balls play longer, faster and truer.
- 46** FUN A museum to thrill your inner mobster.

features

- cover **50** PAUL GIAMATTI: MAN OF MYRIAD ROLES
There is seemingly no role Paul Giamatti can't tackle, and now he returns to TV as the complicated lawman Chuck Rhoades Jr. in Showtime's "Billions."
- golf **62** A CENTURY OF PEBBLE BEACH
The famed California seaside golf course celebrates its 100th birthday by hosting the U.S. Open. In case you didn't make the cut, we tell you how to play the course.
- spirits **74** COLLECTIBLE BOURBON
Sudden interest in pre-Prohibition whiskey is boosting Bourbon on the auction market. But the current market also has finds that will develop a history of their own.



ON THE COVER
Paul Giamatti, the man of a billion faces. *Photographed exclusively for CIGAR AFICIONADO by David Needleman*




ASHTON[®]

Trust Your Taste

ashtoncigar.com

sports **83** **BASEBALL IN THE BLOOD**
Baseball isn't just a national pastime in the Dominican Republic, it's a way of life starting at childhood. That 12-month-a-year obsession with the game has produced more major leaguers than any country outside of the United States.

cigars

tasting **90** We rate 80 cigars in six sizes: Churchills (90), coronas (92), corona gordas (94), figurados (96), lonsdales (98) and robustos (100). Find expert shopping advice in our Buying Guide (102) and see how well cigars age in Connoisseur's Corner (104).

industry **106** **A CIGAR FACTORY TURNS FIFTY**
Tabacalera de Garcia, the maker of such storied cigars as Montecristo, Romeo y Juileta and H. Upmann, may be middle-aged, but it makes almost a third of the handmade cigars shipped every year to the U.S. from the Dominican Republic.

big smoke **112** **PARTY AT THE HARD ROCK**
The Big Smoke, CIGAR AFICIONADO's cigar and drink celebration, returned to Florida this year with a fete that introduced readers to cigar rock stars at the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel and Casino.

cuba report **117** **HABANOS DAY**
Education is the theme, but love of tobacco and rum is the draw, when Habanos S.A. takes its show on the road to teach the world about Cuba's best-known exports.

120 **MOMENTS TO REMEMBER**
Photos from our readers as they enjoy themselves and their cigars.

128 **MADE FOR YOU**
Humidors custom-made for the high seas; baseball-inspired belts made to order; a pizza oven that makes heat at home; the personal hearing device that separates you from the crowd; putting pizazz in your shoelaces; and a tea collection with a manly side.



highlights

Fans of corona gordas will love that nine cigars in the category scored 90 points or higher, including three that tied for a top score of 93 points. High scores abounded, especially with cigars rolled in the Dominican Republic and Nicaragua, but none were quite as high as the Room101 Farce It Is A Lonsdale, which scored 94 points.



TOP LONSDALE
ROOM101 FARCE IT IS A LONSDALE
This smoke with a coy name is rolled with tobaccos from five different countries, including Pennsylvania broadleaf in the filler.

DOM. REP.

94



TOP CORONA GORDA
PUNCH DIABLO SCAMP
Billed as the strongest non-Cuban Punch, this corona gorda (also known as a toro) tied with the Aladino Toro and Gran Habano La Conquista Gran Robusto to lead the category.

NICARAGUA

93



TOP CORONA
JOYA SILVER CORONA
This newer Joya tied with another Nicaraguan smoke, Warped Cigars' La Relatos The First, for best score in the corona category.

NICARAGUA

92



TOP ROBUSTO
AGING ROOM QUATTRO NICARAGUA ESPRESSIVO
The Espresso is made by A.J. Fernandez with Nicaraguan tobacco. It tied with Cuba's Partagás Serie D No. 4 for top robusto.

NICARAGUA

92



TOP CHURCHILL
LA FLOR DOMINICANA 1994 MAMBO
Created to commemorate the 20th anniversary of La Flor Dominicana, the Mambo wears an alluring Mexican San Andrés wrapper.

DOM. REP.

91



TOP FIGURADO
ARTURO FUENTE DON CARLOS NO. 2
This portly pyramid, which measures 55 ring gauge, tied with Cuba's Montecristo Petit No. 2 for the top spot in this group.

DOM. REP.

91



BEST BUY
PADRÓN AMBASSADOR MADURO
It's long, it's slender and it sells for only \$5.90. According to Padrón, the tobacco in the Ambassador has been aged a minimum of two and a half years.

NICARAGUA

90



Z8

A world's first:
One-Touch Americano
for light, aromatic,
long coffees

The Z8 uses a special preparation method that combines the coffee with hot water during the extraction process, resulting in full-bodied, deliciously light specialties. Parallel preparation of coffee and milk guarantee the perfect Caffè latte result. The 4.3" high-resolution touchscreen color display with a sophisticated operating concept accounts for intuitive navigation. The Z8 can even be operated from a smartphone or tablet.

Coffee pleasure –
freshly ground,
not capsuled.

SWISS  MADE



X8



GIGA 6



S8



E8



D6



We offer a full range of JURA automatic coffee machines from \$799 to \$8,999.

For expert advice call: 800-709-8210

www.1stincoffee.com

OLIVA





editors' note

The Day Congress Listened to Cigarmakers

On April 5, members of the United States Congress came to Ybor City, Florida, to hear the plight of the premium cigar industry. Sen. Marco Rubio (R-FL), the Chairman of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, led a field hearing called “Keeping Small, Premium Cigar Businesses Rolling.” Joining him were Reps. Kathy Castor (D-FL-14) and Rep. Gus Bilirakis (R-FL-12).

It was the first time Congress had held a hearing dedicated to handmade, premium cigars. It was about time.

Congress needs to take action and finally realize the terrible card that has been dealt to the handmade cigar industry. When the Obama administration put the U.S. tobacco industry under the control of the Food and Drug Administration in 2009, it led to overarching and unnecessary government oversight of the handmade cigar industry. This is a small business segment. In a good year, some 300 million or so handmade cigars are sold, compared with around 13 billion mass-market smokes. Handmade cigars have no reason to be overseen by the FDA, a government agency that has far more important things to focus on.

Under FDA guidelines, cigar companies are forced to operate as if they were wearing shackles. Creating new products? Difficult and expensive. Innovation? Next to impossible. And forget it if you're an entrepreneur who wishes to create a new brand. Government fees alone could cost you an estimated quarter-million dollars before you sold your first \$10 cigar.

The intent of all these new rules was to keep tobacco out of the hands of children. While we firmly believe that minors should not be allowed to smoke or purchase cigars, we also know that the handmade cigar industry needs no policing to achieve

that goal. Children are already discouraged from hand-made cigars by their price and their lack of availability, as most are sold in brick-and-mortar shops where children are not welcome. Even the data from the FDA itself confirms this, as a 2017 study published in the *New England Journal of Medicine* found that very few children in America have ever smoked a premium cigar.

When uninformed politicians target cigarette smoking with scattershot legislation, cigars get caught in the crossfire. The lawmakers don't seem to care that when they aim their guns at big tobacco, they unwittingly harm the many small and family-owned companies that make up so much of the handmade cigar business.

Speaking on behalf of the cigar industry in April were cigar retailer Jeff Borysiewicz, owner of Corona Cigar Co., and Drew Newman, part of the family that owns Tampa's J.C. Newman Cigar Co., which has been selling cigars for 124 years.

“The greatest threat to my business is the heavy hand of government regulations being pushed forward by the FDA,” said Borysiewicz, who called the premium cigar business one “that can get squeezed out of business very easily.”

Newman compared premium cigars to fine wines. “None of this is standardized—it's an art, a tradition that's been passed down from generation to generation to generation,” he said.

Sen. Rubio is that rare lawmaker who seems to understand cigars—he gets it. “If this goes into effect, there are not going to be many premium cigar manufacturers left,” Rubio said during the hearing. The senator asked the panelists if premium cigars could end up being a “contraband product” with unchecked FDA regulation. Newman said it was a possibility, saying the government could “squash this industry like a bug...It's what keeps us up at night, and worries us. We urgently need relief.”

We applaud Sen. Rubio for his efforts to protect the handmade cigar industry from FDA regulation. Now it's time for his colleagues in Congress to follow along and give the handmade cigar industry the protection from FDA regulation that it absolutely needs.

MARVIN R. SHANKEN
EDITOR & PUBLISHER

DAVID SAVONA
EXECUTIVE EDITOR

PACKAGED
WITH
B
Soveda.
2-WAY HUMIDITY
CONTROL



MONTECRISTO

CINCUENTA

CELEBRATING
50 YEARS
OF ARTISANAL CRAFTSMANSHIP
AND PASSION FOR TOBACCO



SURGEON GENERAL WARNING: Tobacco
Use Increases The Risk Of Infertility,
Stillbirth And Low Birth Weight.



@montecristo_usa

out of the humidor

Dear Marvin,

Being a fan of the series, I very much enjoyed your April 2019 article on “The Sopranos.” [“First Family,” March/April 2019.] There were a couple of bits of information I am curious about. Was James Gandolfini a regular cigar smoker off set, or did he just smoke cigars when called for in his acting career? What cigar brands and vitolas did he smoke during the scenes in “The Sopranos?” And what were his personal favorites?

Numa Robertson

Charlotte, North Carolina

Editors’ Response: James Gandolfini smoked cigars on screen and off. In the first story we dedicated to “The Sopranos” [“Mob Rule,” March/April 2001] writer Mervyn Rothstein interviewed Gandolfini, who spoke about smoking cigars. “I very much love cigars,” said Gandolfini at the time. “I’ll smoke maybe three or four a week. I’ll sit in the same place and not move for 45 minutes. It’s a ritual I really enjoy.” As for brand, size and shape, he was like many modern-day cigar smokers, eschewing a favorite and preferring to sample. “I like smoking a million different things. Sometimes I’ll want something a little stronger, sometimes not. I’m not much of an expert, but I’ll know immediately if I like something or if I don’t like it. I’m still at the stage where I’m experimenting with many different cigars, and I haven’t picked one that I consistently like.” His character seemed to share his smoking habits, as we recall Tony Soprano lighting up a variety of cigars, from Ashtons to Cubans to C.A.O.s and others.

Dear Marvin,

I am 55 years old and have had a lot of stress from work and the death of a very close friend. We were like father and son. I saw your magazine and tried cigars. I have discovered they are very relaxing. My taste has improved and I am picking up many wonderful flavors. My favorite is Hoyo de Monterrey Epicure No 1. I go to my cigar store so often, my tobacconist even gives me a discount.

Ross C. Melhuish

Melbourne, Australia

Editors’ Response: Our condolences. We’re glad to hear that our magazine helped during your difficult times.



“I hope you make a cover poster of this issue, so I can put the last one next to it.”

Chris Adams

Submitted via Facebook

Dear Marvin,

This issue (just the cover) is worth my subscription.

Scott Johnson

Evansville, Indiana

submitted via Instagram

Dear Marvin,

I hope you make a cover poster of this issue so I can put the last one next to it.

Chris Adams

submitted via Facebook

Correction The Cuban Montecristo Petit Edmundo was mislabeled as Nicaraguan in the Buying Guide of the March/April issue.

CONTACT US **TWITTER** @cigaraficmag • **FACEBOOK** facebook.com/CigarAficionado • **INSTAGRAM** @cigaraficmag

E-MAIL letters@cigaraficionado.com • **LETTERS** 825 8th Ave., 33rd floor, New York, NY 10019 • **EDITORS’ BLOGS** Find out what the editors of CIGAR AFICIONADO are thinking—and smoking—in our editors’ blogs. David Savona, Gordon Mott, Jack Bettridge, Gregory Mottola and Andrew Nagy want to hear from you. The conversation is taking place on cigaraficionado.com.

Printed in the U.S.A.
A publication of M. Shanken Communications, Inc.
Worldwide Plaza, 825 Eighth Avenue, New York, NY 10019
212/684-4224 fax: 212/684-5424 e-mail: letters@cigaraficionado.com

VOL. 27 NO. 4

Editor & Publisher

MARVIN R. SHANKEN

Executive Editor	DAVID SAVONA
Managing Editor	GREGORY MOTTOLA
Senior Features Editor	JACK BETTRIDGE
Art Director	JOHN THOMPSON
Associate Editor	ANDREW NAGY
Assistant Editor	DAVID CLOUGH
Editorial Assistant/Tasting Coordinator	THOMAS PAPPALARDO
Senior Contributing Editor	GORDON MOTT
Contributing Editors	PAUL A. EISENSTEIN, MARSHALL FINE, LAURIE KAHLE, MICHAEL KAPLAN, LARRY OLMSTED, JEFF WILLIAMS
Photo Editor	CASEY OTO
Associate Art Director	TODD MILLER
Associate Art Director	LISA AURIGEMMA
Designer	HENRY ENG
Designer	DIANA WITKOWSKI
Promotions Designer	LISA GEORGE
Assistant Photo Editor	KARISSA MAGGIO
Manager, Cigar Aficionado Online	ANDREW NAGY
Production Associate, New Media	EDISON A. LEON
Director of Digital Media	JAMES LAPORTE
Site Developer	ANURADHA UDYAVER
Senior Vice President, Ad Sales and Services	CONSTANCE MCGILVRAY
Vice President/Associate Publisher	BARRY ABRAMS
Corporate Advertising	MIRIAM MORGENSTERN
Director, Beverage/Alcohol Advertising	MICHAEL MCGOLDRICK
Senior Account Manager, New Business	GEOFF MADDEN
Integrated Marketing Director	KRISTIN JOHNSON
Senior Account Directors, West Coast	LINDSEY B. RONALD, CHERYL LEWIS
Southeast Advertising Sales	WHEELER MORRISON, GREEN LEAVES MEDIA
Detroit Advertising Sales	CHRISTINE ANDERSON
Arizona Golf Advertising Sales	STEVE BLIMAN
Advertising Events Manager	JENNIFER ARCELLA
Sales Assistants	JENNY JAIKARAN, MAGGIE KOTRABA
Vice President, Custom Media	DON GATTERDAM
Advertising Services Manager	CHRISTINA CHIAFFITELLA
New Media Coordinator	HILARY CHALSON
Director of Technology	MICHAEL TURRO
Lead Developer	RICHARD OWENS
Imaging	SAMANTHA SAFFER, ELI HALPERN
Prepress	DAVE BOULANGER, ERIC CHEUNG
Senior Vice President, Events	LYNN RITTENBAND
Senior Events Director	LIZ MOTT
Events Director	SUSANNAH NOLAN
Senior Events Manager	LISA GRIBBIN
Events Manager	SHAUNTAY DUNBAR
Senior Vice President, Marketing and Circulation	LAURA ZANDI
Senior Circulation Director	PHYLICIA BEDOYA
Assistant Circulation Manager	TINA RATWANI
Senior Retail Sales Director	JEANNE HOLLY
Retail Account Manager	SHIREN FELICIEN
Chairman	MARVIN R. SHANKEN
Vice Chairman	MICHAEL D. MOABA
Senior Advisor to the Chairman	MEL MANNION
Senior Vice President	CONSTANCE MCGILVRAY
Senior Vice President	LYNN RITTENBAND
Senior Vice President	LAURA ZANDI
Chief Financial Officer	STEVEN GORDON
Vice President, Business Development	JESSICA SHANKEN
Vice President, Production	KEVIN MULLIGAN
Executive Assistant to the Chairman	SHEENA DELLANZO

Questions about your subscription? Call 800/365-4929
Questions about your retail sales account? Call 800/344-0763



CHAPTER II

RISING HEAT

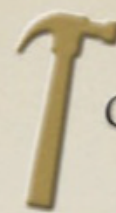
Hennessy
X.O

EACH DROP IS AN ODYSSEY

PLEASE DRINK RESPONSIBLY. Imported Cognac Hennessy®, 40% Alc./Vol. (80°). ©2019 Imported by Moët Hennessy USA, Inc., New York, NY. HENNESSY is a registered trademark.



Hand



Crafted



José O. Padrón

1964

When you remember life's important moments,
you'll remember a Padrón.

For decades, Padrón smokers have shared with us the stories of special moments in their lives that have been distinguished by smoking one of our cigars. Striving to create great cigars worthy of such special times is our singular motivation, those moments shared with family and friends. The Padrón Family thanks you for your continued loyalty and trust in the Padrón name.

www.padron.com



Twenty-one teams competed in the 11th annual Els for Autism Pro-Am at Old Palm Golf Club on March 11, raising more than \$1 million for the charity.

The Pro-Am To Cure Autism

THE 11TH ANNUAL ELS FOR AUTISM PRO-AM RAISED \$1 MILLION

BY DAVID SAVONA

When major winner Graeme McDowell pulled his golf cart up to the first tee at Old Palm Golf Club, he reached into his bag and pulled out two handmade cigars. Then he smiled as he saw the La Flor Dominicana booth, realizing he had brought coals to Newcastle. There would be no need for your own cigars on this day.

It was the 11th annual Els for Autism Pro-Am, sponsored by CIGAR AFICIONADO and *Wine Spectator* magazines, and the cigars were free-flowing. McDowell soon lit up, joining his four cigar-loving playing partners: radio star Rush Limbaugh, Fox News anchor Brett Baier, former New

York City Mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani, and the most ardent cigar smoker of all, CIGAR AFICIONADO editor and publisher Marvin R. Shanken, who created the Pro-Am with pro golfer Ernie Els.

The charity tournament, held on March 11, raised \$1,020,000, pushing the total raised during the 11-year-history of the event to approximately \$11 million. The money raised has gone to the development of the Els Center of Excellence, an education center in Jupiter, Florida. “We feel it’s an absolute game changer in the world of autism,” Els said at the pairings dinner the night before the event, held on a warm, clear evening on the picturesque grounds of the Els Center.

Els and Shanken stressed that there

was much more work to be done. “We have already invested \$35 million in this campus,” said Shanken at the dinner, “and another \$15 million gets us over the top.” Said Els: “We’ve got a long ways to go.”

Shanken’s team was one of 21 teeing it up for a very good cause. Each team was paired with a prominent golfer. In addition to Els (a four-time major winner) and McDowell (winner of the 2010 U.S. Open), there was Jack Nicklaus, who has won 18 majors, more than any other player; Nick Price, the winner of three major championships; 2011 Masters Champion Charl Schwartzel; Louis Oosthuizen (winner of the 2010 Open Championship); Ian Baker-Finch, winner of the 1991 Open Championship; two-time LPGA major

BENJAMIN RUSNAK



Marvin R. Shanken (center)
with his team of golfers:
Rudolph W. Giuliani,
Rush Limbaugh,
Graeme McDowell
and Bret Baier.



Golfing legend Jack Nicklaus, sinking a smooth putt at Old Palm.



Ernie Els teeing off on the first hole. Els and Shanken joined forces to create the Pro-Am after Els revealed that his son Ben was autistic.



LPGA pro Jessica Korda, chipping with perfect form, led the winning team.

winner Cristie Kerr; Abraham Ancer; Kiradech Aphibarnrat; K.J. Choi; Luke Donald; Branden Grace; Li Haotong; Morgan Hoffmann; Chase Koepka; Jessica Korda; Anirban Lahiri; Marc Leishman; CT Pan and Cameron Tringale.

The event was won by the team of LPGA pro Korda, Steve Peck of SAP, Jerry DeMuro and Steve Collis.

Cigar and drink stations were spread

throughout the course for the Pro-Am, keeping a festive mood throughout the day. Drinks were provided by Belvedere Vodka, Glenlivet and Grey Goose, and cigars were provided by Alec Bradley, EPC Cigars, La Flor Dominicana, My Father Cigars and Oliva. Bobby Jones donated shirts. Arturo Fuente and Altadis U.S.A. donated cigars smoked after the dinner on Sunday evening.

The event concluded with a hole-in-one contest, sponsored by Wine Australia, with each pro taking a shot at Old Palm's 19th hole, a tricky green defended by water. No aces fell this day, although Schwartzel came closest, with a shot that settled five feet from the cup.

For more coverage of the charitable event, and for more on the past Pro-Ams, visit cigaraficionado.com. ♦

LIGHT UP THE GAME

You got this.

INTRODUCING

ALMA
DEL
FUEGO



Perfected over
154 years,
yours to enjoy now.

VISIT OUR BOOTH #2259 AT IPCPR

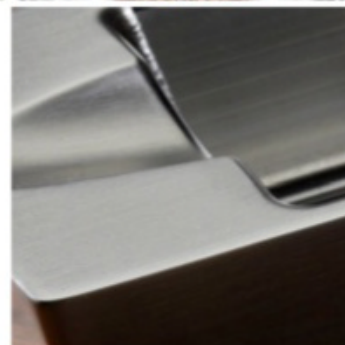
#LightUpYourSoul
PlascenciaCigars.com


PLASENCIA
CIGARS

good life guide

Living well demands that we indulge in things that are of superior quality and excellent origin. This guide aspires to find and recommend the best of everything to aficionados of the good life.

places	30	THE GRAND HOTEL LE TROIS ROIS, SWITZERLAND
style	33	OUT OF THE BLUE
wheels	36	BMW X7
time	38	SALMON DIALS
cigars	41	SON & SON GOLD BULLION ASHTRAY
drink	43	SUPER TEQUILAS
sport	45	HAVE A BALL
fun	46	THE MOB MUSEUM





The Grand Hotel Le Trois Rois, Basel, Switzerland

For some three centuries, Le Trois Rois has offered travelers a slice of Old European luxury on the banks of the Rhine. Named for Caspar, Melchior and Balthazar, the Three Kings offers a level of accommodation that the magi wouldn't ever have contemplated during their trek to see a boy in manger.

The hotel's hospitality has been enjoyed by the likes of Napoleon Bonaparte, Queen Elizabeth II, Pablo Picasso, the Empress of Japan, Duke Ellington, The Rolling Stones, Charles Dickens, Jean Paul Sartre and the Dalai Lama. But the less celebrated among us will also treasure this palace of delights for its sybaritic offerings: fine wine and liquor, heavenly cuisine and a dedicated cigar lounge.

Chef du Bar Thomas Huhn mixes The Vesper, Knob Creek Old Fashioned and Negronis in the elegant Bar Les Trois Rois. At Cheval Blanc, Chef Peter Knogl's cooking will convince you why it was awarded three Michelin stars for its sense of French haute cuisine with Mediterranean and Asian influences. After dinner, choose a digestif from a judicious selection of more than 100 whiskies. Huhn certainly knows his spirits, exhibiting astute choices from select independent whiskey bottlers and Japanese rarities, side by side with Richard Hennessy Cognac and a magnum of the Rémy Martin Black Pearl.

Take your selection downstairs to the hotel's spacious Salon du Cigare. Next to the tidy bar is a walk-in humidor filled with 135 selections. Browse the full range from the bar's touch-screen TV cigar menu or by iPad from the comfort of your leather armchair. The tobacco is predominantly Cuban, but balanced with sections dedicated to smokes from the Dominican Republic, Nicaragua, Costa Rica and Honduras. Reward yourself with a Montecristo No. 2 Gran Reserva or a Cohiba 1966 Edición Limitada 2011. Its



atmosphere is relaxed and clubby with dark wooden bookcases filled with heavy tomes and portraiture. In the summertime, guests can take their time over their cigar on the outside terrace.

The hotel has been sympathetically restored after a refurbishment in 2006 that ensured that the 101 rooms and suites (starting at \$660) retain their period charm while adding the subtle touches of modernity and luxury expected by a discerning clientele. The Suite Les Trois Rois is decorated in an Art Deco style and offers a private rooftop hot tub with unparalleled views over the medieval Old Town—and yet another opportunity to enjoy a fine cigar.

Visit lestroisrois.com

—Jonny McCormick

When You Focus on Quality, the Awards Pour In.

Here at Heaven Hill Distillery, we've been *Lifting America's Spirit Since 1935*®. And one thing that never gets old is winning awards for whiskeys of exceptional quality. In 2017, Elijah Craig® Barrel Proof was named *Whisky Advocate's* Whisky of the Year. Last year, our whiskeys won Best Bourbon, Best Single Barrel Bourbon, and Best Small Batch Bourbon at the San Francisco World Spirits Competition. And while awards are great, we never forget our true mission: Preserving the rich traditions of American whiskey-making, guiding its exciting evolution and championing its exciting future.

HEAVEN HILL
EST DISTILLERY 1935



Think Wisely.
Drink Wisely.® Heaven Hill Distillery, Bardstown, KY © 2019

*2018 San Francisco World Spirits Competition

HeavenHillDistillery.com



cigar
aficionado

Aniversario 1965



Robusto 5 x 52



Robusto Grande 5 1/2 x 56



Toro 6 x 52



Torpedo 6 1/4 x 52



Churchill 7 x 52




NAT CICCICO[®]
SINCE 1965

www.natcicco.com

RATED
92



Out of the Blue

The familiar advice offered to men who go shopping for new clothing is that you can't go wrong with navy blue. The problem is you can't go very far right either. As classic as it is, that color has been standard issue for business uniforms forever, meaning you and everyone sports them. This season, it's time to promote your mufti to something more daring, while still staying in the same sector of the color wheel.

Happily, an ocean of other blue tones awaits. The collection for spring/summer from Stefano Ricci, Florence's most exclusive menswear maker, is dubbed "man and the sea" with an imaginative palette that flashes cobalt blue, steel blue, gray-magenta blue,

sapphire blue and gentian blue—everything, it seems, but navy.

The suit silhouette is a trim two-button jacket, with available matching vests. Evening wear is represented with midnight blue and ultramarine suit coats that double as smoking jackets. The color scheme bleeds into other categories, with dress, T- and polo shirts, as well as bags, loafers, shoes and eyewear. The company, which has collaborated with Arturo Fuente on a line of cigars, offers a tool kit (cutter and lighter) packaged in a gray-blue leather box. And what would a blue-themed collection be without blue jeans?

Visit stefanoricci.com

—Jack Bettridge

#1 Cigar of the Year 2014



cigar
aficionado

OLIVA



MELANIO
GRAN RESERVA LIMITADA

The Oliva Serie V Melanio is hand rolled using expertly fermented ligero fillers, leaves known for their robust and rich flavor. This special cigar is sure to exceed a premium cigar smoker's highest expectations.

Blending Notes: The Serie V Melanio is full flavored yet smooth. The long filler tobaccos are a blend of Oliva Nicaraguan Habano that emphasizes tobacco from the Jalapa region, an area known for a more nuanced leaf than the Esteli or Condega regions. This carefully aged Jalapa blend produces a particularly flavored smoke.

COMPLEX / SMOOTH / BALANCED

Wrapper: Ecuadorian
Binder: Nicaraguan
Filler: Nicaraguan



For more information, visit us at
www.olivacigar.com



BMW X7

In the 20 years since BMW launched the X5, one of the original European luxury SUVs, it has filled in most of the remaining white space with products ranging from the X1 to X6. The one gap—a full-size, three-row “ute” that could serve as a counterpoint to BMW’s traditional flagship, the 7-Series—has just been plugged by the X7. While at first glance you notice the imposing presence, it would be a mistake to think of the X7 as little more than a stretched version of the familiar X5.

Yes, it’s nine inches longer—nearly the size of the Cadillac Escalade or Lincoln Navigator—and boasts the largest-ever application of the familiar BMW double-kidney grille. But the X7 is also loaded with the sort of ultra-premium features you’d expect on a 7-Series—or the also-new 8-Series.

Among other things, there’s the new BMW “user experience” which transforms the traditional iDrive-controlled infotainment system into something akin to Amazon’s Alexa. Simply say, “Hey, BMW,” and it will change radio stations, adjust the climate control, program navigation and a lot more by plain English, rather than

hard-to-remember commands. The X7 also features an array of advanced driver assistance systems, and can even run for extended periods on limited-access highways in hands-free mode.

Like the latest-generation X5, the flagship ute is surprisingly capable on-road or off, with a standard two-axle air suspension that can be raised or lowered manually or automatically. At peak, it boasts nearly nine inches of ground clearance. The Driving Experience Control system allows a motorist to switch between a variety of on- and off-road modes. Select the SAND mode on an unpaved seashore byway and you’ll never know you left the pavement.

Starting at \$73,900, the “base” model features a 3.0-liter inline-six making 335 horsepower and 330 pound-feet of torque, enough to pull this massive mule from 0 to 60 in 5.8 seconds. The upgrade is a 4.4-liter, twin-turbo V-8 making 456 hp and 479 pound-feet—shaving the 0 to 60 down to 5.2 seconds.

Visit bmw.com

—Paul A. Eisenstein

— ESTD 1846 —

Dewar's®

DOUBLE AGED

• FOR EXTRA •
SMOOTHNESS



WE AGE



WE BLEND



WE AGE AGAIN



ENJOY RESPONSIBLY.

©2019. DEWAR'S BLENDED SCOTCH WHISKY 40% ALC. BY VOL. IMPORTED BY JOHN DEWAR & SONS COMPANY, CORAL GABLES, FL.



Salmon Dials

Like the pink-hued fish that brave the current to spawn at their place of origin, salmon dial watches, adorned with coppery, golden faces and framed by white metal cases, have returned. In this case, the hottest trend in watch design harks back much further than the one-year breeding cycle of its namesake fish: all the way to the mid-20th century.

The classic Minerva watches of the 1940s and '50s inspired Montblanc's Heritage salmon collection. Minerva was a renowned Swiss chronograph specialist that Montblanc acquired in 2006 so it could manufacture its own movements. While the new Heritage Pulsograph Limited Edition 100 (center, \$30,000) shows off its intricate Minerva workings through a sapphire crystal case back, the dial is salmon with a pulsometer scale for measuring heart rates. The elegant 40-mm, stainless-steel, mono-pusher chronograph gives another nostalgic nod: the watch's chronograph minute counter has elongated indexes at 3, 6 and 9 minutes, once used to keep track of the time elapsed during payphone calls.

Meanwhile, Audemars Piguet dressed up its flagship Royal Oak with a pink-gold-toned "Petite Tapisserie" dial. A boutique exclusive that is sure to be elusive, the 39-mm Royal Oak "Jumbo" Extra-Thin (left, \$55,400) contrasts the salmon dial with a satin-brushed, 18-karat white-gold case and bracelet for a sleek, modern evolution

of Gerald Genta's enduring 1972 vision of a luxury steel sport watch. The use of white gold is a rarity for the popular model as the brand has made Royal Oaks in that metal only once before—in the 1980s.

The boutique brand Czapek & Cie is going all in on the trend with four new Faubourg Cracovie chronographs named for salmon species—Chinook, Coho, Sockeye and King—each with different colorations. Limited to 18 pieces, the Sockeye (right, \$23,500) contrasts navy-blue accents with a dial made of an alloy of 55 percent gold mixed with platinum, palladium and silver with an electroplated salmon finish. The distinctive Résonance pattern used for the hand-guilloché engraving creates concentric circles radiating from the two sub-dials at 3 and 9 o'clock intersecting to form bas-relief squares.

A new version of the highly complicated Datograph Perpetual Tourbillon (\$287,800) from Germany's A. Lange & Söhne has a pink-gold dial. But don't dare call it salmon. "The Swiss do the salmon thing," joked Anthony de Haas, director of product development, at its debut. "We don't like the smell of fish—this is 18-karat solid pink gold."

Visit montblanc.com, audemarspiguet.com, czapek.com, alange-soehne.com

—Laurie Kahle

— ESTD 1846 —

Dewar's®

AGED **15** YEARS

DOUBLE AGED
• FOR EXTRA •
SMOOTHNESS



90
POINTS

Whisky
ADVOCATE

“Divine stone fruit aromas.”

Jonny McCormick

93
POINTS



WHISKYCAST

“Excellent! Reminder of just how complex and well-rounded a good blend can be.”

Mark Gillespie

92
POINTS



“Excellent. Highly recommended.”

ENJOY RESPONSIBLY.

©2019. DEWAR'S BLENDED SCOTCH WHISKY 40% ALC. BY VOL. IMPORTED BY JOHN DEWAR & SONS COMPANY, CORAL GABLES, FL.



AJ

AJ FERNANDEZ
— CIGAR COMPANY —





Son & Son Gold Bullion Ashtray

Unless you're a high-ranking government official, it's unlikely you'll ever get inside the gold vault at Fort Knox, but that doesn't mean you can't bring a little Fort Knox into your smoking room. Thanks to the vision and engineering acumen of the British company Son & Son, you can now ash your cigar into a gold or silver bar replica so convincing, it will look as though you've robbed the Federal Reserve.

To attain such a realistic look and feel, Son & Son mills its ashtrays from solid blocks of brass (gold model) or steel (silver) on a computer-controlled machine to recreate the sloping bevels of the bullion shape. An ashtray pattern is machined out of the bottom. It's then polished with a brushed-silver satin finish or electroplated in 24K gold—all to stunning effect.

The opulent fine finishes are also durable and burn-resistant. Half the fun is holding the ashtray in your hand just to feel the sheer weight of it (nearly two pounds). But keep in mind, these ashtrays are prone to fingerprints, which is why Son & Son includes a suede cleaning cloth. A quick buffing restores its luster after you've turned the ashtray over to show off its bullion side.

The ashtrays measure 6 1/2 inches long, and they don't come cheap. The silver-bar ashtray costs £599 (\$800), the gold-bar, £799 (\$1,061). Seeing as real gold bullion of equal weight would cost more than \$40,000, these replicas just might be a steal, but then again, who would ever ash on a real bar of gold?

Visit son-son.com

—Gregory Mottola

MICALLEF CIGARS



GRANDE BOLD

MATA FINA

NICARAGUA

LIGERO

MADURO

SUMATRA

Building a whole new
cigar experience.



Reserva



Leyenda
No. 1



Herencia
Habano

Experiencia
La Crema

Rated
90

MicallefCigars.com | 817.598.5231 | @MicallefCigars

*Ratings are from Cigar Aficionado.



Super Tequilas

Tequila fans know that Mexico's piquant spirit is made from agave, a succulent plant that takes eight to 12 years to mature. Sadly for those in the business, a similar cycle brings an agave shortage once every decade or so. But don't panic. The shortage we're in now comes with some good news: it probably won't last, and the best Tequilas aren't going away.

Underestimating the long-range market brought the trouble, but shortages are predicted to end soon. And many superpremium brands shielded themselves with long-standing agave contracts. Some believe that mass-produced mixto Tequilas were hardest hit. While still called Tequila, they may have sliced their agave nectar content to as little as 51 percent. Skip them and look for bottles labeled "100 percent agave."

That's where you will find the kind of complexity that defines a top-tier liquor. Tequila can pull layers of flavor that are meant for sipping and not for drinking contests.

While the aging trend has created many fine, mature Tequilas, the four categories all have stand-outs. Patrón Estate Release is essentially clear, yet brings peppery, herbal, doughy and citrus notes that showcase the agave, while being supremely smooth. Stepping up to the reposado category (aged two months to less than a year), you find a Herradura with floral, citrus and buttery vanilla notes. In the same slot is Cazadores, which exhibits meaty fruit, caramel and cinnamon. The next level is añejo (more than a year old, less than three) with drams like Casamigos, which tastes of leather, tropical fruit and rich woods, and Milagro, with oak, nuts and a range of spices. At the extra añejo level (more than three years old) Reserva de la Familia offers brandy flavors with floral notes, almonds and the tang of pimento. Casa Noble makes an eight-year-old version of its Selección del Fundador that exudes dried fruit, cocoa, caramel, truffles and spice.

Savor them slowly though. After all, there's an agave shortage.

—Jack Bettridge



TASTE THE SPIRIT OF NICARAGUA

PSyKo
SEVEN

NICARAGUA
Indiana

Unleash the madness of this mind-bending
blend with rich, nuanced flavors of Nicaraguan
tobaccos hand-rolled in a 2007 vintage
Desflorada wrapper.

PSyKo SEVEN Nicaragua cigars are created at
the Orteiz factory in Condega, Nicaragua.



VENTURA
CIGAR

VenturaCigarCompany.com



VenturaCigar



VenturaCigarCo



VenturaCigar



Have A Ball

Better. Longer. Faster. The newest golf balls on the market boast accolades that might remind you of the old TV show “The Six Million Dollar Man.” But the hype is anchored in fact. Golf balls have evolved in huge leaps, and recent tweaks have made good balls even better.

The leader of the pack is the Titleist Pro V1, so dominant that every major championship in 2018 was won by a golfer playing this ball, or its (slightly) harder variation, the Pro V1x. The 2019 versions, which appeared in January, boast thinner urethane covers and thicker inner casing layers to increase ball speed. And the cores are stiffer, designed to boost driving distance and add forgiveness while maintaining the ball’s distinctive ability to stick to a green. Another new development: You can even get them in yellow. A dozen retails for \$52.

TaylorMade, played by such standouts as Dustin Johnson and Rory McIlroy, has enhanced its TP5 and TP5x balls (\$44.99/dozen) to better convert compression into speed. The ball’s five layers become increasingly stiff from the core to the soft,

urethane cover. Callaway’s new Chrome Soft X Triple Track (\$44.99/dozen) went on sale April 19. With their increased speed, short-iron feel and what Callaway calls “exceptional mis-hit forgiveness,” the balls can be found in the pockets of Phil Mickelson and other stars. No need for a Sharpie with this new model—red-and-blue alignment lines are stamped on every ball. The new Wilson Staff Duo Professional (\$34.99/dozen) is an enhanced version of the Wilson Staff Duo. The new ball came out in December, and is built to add more spin to your wedges, perfect for holding a tough green.

For those who are truly confident, how about playing golf with a ball that says TIGER on the side? For you, there is Bridgestone’s TOUR B XS Tiger Woods Edition, which Woods himself used to great effect to win The Masters in April. A portion of sales of the \$44.99/dozen balls goes to Woods’ TGR Foundation. If you’re really daring, try playing with these while wearing red and black on a Sunday.

—David Savona

The Mob Museum



The barber's chair in which the founder of Murder, Inc. Albert Anastasia was rubbed out is on display at the Mob Museum, a Las Vegas facility that documents, but doesn't glorify the stories of racketeers like Al Capone (left).

On a cold February morning in 1929, four men, two of whom dressed as police, entered a Chicago garage, lined up five gangsters, a former optician and a mechanic and filled them with lead. The site of the St. Valentine's Day Massacre was long ago leveled, but the bullet-pocked wall against which the victims stood still exists in Las Vegas. The painstakingly resurrected artifact of history's most infamous mob execution is among the exhibits in that city's Mob Museum, an institution dedicated to education, but nonetheless captivating for its morbid content.

"People are drawn to the characters. They are charismatic individuals with their fingers on the levers of power. People are intrigued by that kind of crime, fascinated by how it works," says Geoff Schumacher, the museum's senior director of content, a historian who's quick to say "I was never in the mob." But much of what the public thinks they know about organized crime comes from

movies and TV. The museum strives to separate myth from reality, while explaining the inner workings.

Appropriately, the facility is located at a former courthouse that once hosted a Kefauver Committee hearing (the Senate crime investigation dramatized in *The Godfather Part II*). Exhibits like 100 Years of Made Men feature photos and bios of mobsters from small-time crooks to kingpins such as "Lucky" Luciano, Al Capone and Carmine "The Cigar" Galante, who even in gory death still clenched a cigar in his teeth.

But the museum emphasizes criminology, with much collected evidence (e.g., coroner reports and slugs removed from bodies) among its artifacts. Its crime lab offers an interactive experience. The Firearm Training Simulator places participants firmly on the side of the law. "We are not in the business of glorifying the mob," says Schumacher.

While Chicago and New York are famous for racketeering, the Mob Museum shows how organized crime infected the whole country, in places like Kansas City, New Orleans, Detroit, Boston and, of course, Las Vegas. And should the size of society's seamy underbelly start to weigh on you, you can always visit the basement's replicated speakeasy, where a working pot still churns out hootch—legal, not bootleg.

Visit themobmuseum.org

—Jack Bettridge

NEW |  | Glenfiddich®

CAMPFIRE SMOKINESS



TOFFEE SWEETNESS

NO.4 IN THE GLENFIDDICH EXPERIMENTAL SERIES

Glenfiddich has long pushed boundaries and challenged traditions. Never has this been more evident than with Fire & Cane. It's a bold fusion of campfire smokiness with oak and peaty notes, finished in Latin rum casks to produce a surprising toffee sweetness.

Arturo Fuente **DON CARLOS**

His brilliance forever etched on the past and future



ONE MAN, ONE AMAZING STORY...

"The Man"

Carlos A. Fuente
1935 - 2016

"We will never rush the hands of time"



ARTURO FUENTE

The Reigning Family Of Premium Cigars
Since 1912





Roles of a Lifetime

“Billions” star Paul Giamatti shifts seamlessly from one unforgettable role to the next

P

BY MARSHALL FINE
PORTRAITS BY DAVID NEEDLEMAN

AUL GIAMATTI stood on a movie set, surrounded by hundreds of extras, most of them made up to look like talking monkeys, just like he was. And at that moment, he knew he'd made it. “As a kid, if you'd told me I was going to be in a *Planet of the Apes* movie, I would have felt like the most powerful human being on Earth,” Giamatti says, his eyes brightening as he thinks back to Tim Burton's multimillion-dollar 2001 remake. “Then I got paid, and I thought, ‘If I can keep working like this, I'm going to be OK.’”

Now 51, Giamatti is more than OK: He has flourished, in an almost-30-year career that has included Emmy and Golden Globe awards, along with nominations for an Oscar and a Tony. The man wears his stardom as lightly as the thin jacket he's donned against a rainy March morning in New York. In a black sweater and khakis, balding with glasses, he looks like the kind of guy who reads books while he rides the subway. A voracious reader and science-fiction buff (“I like oddball things,” he says) Giamatti has been photographed doing exactly that, the photos going viral on social media.

Greeted as a regular at Teresa's restaurant in his Brooklyn Heights neighborhood in the lull before lunch, he sits at a table in the rear and orders an egg-white omelette and kasha. In person, he looks like a carefree version of Chuck Rhoades Jr., his driven character on “Billions,” the Showtime series that had just finished filming its fourth season.

His receding brown hair and beard show more gray than the burnished Rhoades.

STYLING BY MICHAEL FISHER FOR THE WALL GROUP
GROOMING BY MELISSA DEZARATE FOR THE WALL GROUP

SUIT, SHIRT: BRIONI / POCKET SQUARE: ETON; PHOTOGRAPHED AT BEVACCO, BROOKLYN

The ferocity that always flickers in his character's eyes is nowhere to be seen. In conversation, Giamatti's blue-green eyes are inviting, inquisitive, amused.

Part of a generation of actors that includes Tom Cruise, Brad Pitt and George Clooney, Giamatti has carved out his own unique place as a leading man with the soul and look of a character actor. If this were the 1940s, he wouldn't be Cary Grant or Gary Cooper, he'd be Humphrey Bogart. In the same way that the teen and college-aged baby boomers of the 1960s rediscovered Bogart, Giamatti is connecting with a younger generation that was introduced to

Any person's list of their 10 favorite movies will have one with Paul Giamatti in there somewhere.

him as the crazy jerk who got dyed blue in the 2002 teen comedy, *Big Fat Liar*. His star run in "Billions" has reintroduced him to a millennial audience eager to delve into his rich filmography.

"Any person's list of their 10 favorite movies will have one with Paul Giamatti in there somewhere," says Valerie Bodurtha, one of the organizers of Wax Paul Now, an effort by fans to get Madame Tussaud's to create a wax replica of Giamatti. "I thought it was hilarious," Giamatti says. "They papered neighborhoods all up and down the East Coast with flyers. People were sending me pictures of the poster on telephone poles in Miami. Hey, nothing would make me happier."

That attitude only adds to Giamatti's street cred as a serious actor who doesn't take himself too seriously. Since winning both the Emmy and the Golden Globe for *John Adams* in 2008, he has

continued to build his reputation in films like *12 Years a Slave* and *Straight Outta Compton* and television shows from "Downton Abbey" to "Inside Amy Schumer," where he earned an Emmy nomination playing a very long-suffering God. "I just want to continue to be a working actor," he says, an approach that has endeared him to a list of directors that includes Steven Spielberg, Milos Forman, Tim Burton, Alexander Payne, Ron Howard and Tom McCarthy.

"It's always one thing to talk about complexity and conflict within a character. It's quite another to witness an actor exploring that," says Bill Pohlad, who cast Giamatti in *Love & Mercy*.

The youngest of three children of the late A. Bartlett Giamatti, a classical scholar who was president of Yale University and commissioner of baseball, Paul Giamatti attended private schools, then Yale, and considered teaching. But, after getting his undergraduate degree, a fondness for acting led to several years working with an experimental theater troupe in Seattle, an experience that made him decide to study acting seriously. He came back to Yale for grad school, then almost immediately launched himself on the New York stage, picking up TV work along the way. His breakout film role came playing Howard Stern's explosive foil in 1997's *Private Parts*, a character who Stern nicknamed Pig Vomit. Giamatti even got the film's last word, in a post-credits monologue that ends with Giamatti screaming, "Howard Stern can kiss my ass in Hell!"

It's amazing how many notable films Giamatti pops up in. You're watching *Saving Private Ryan*, *Donnie Brasco*, *The Truman Show* or *Man on the Moon* and, suddenly, hey, isn't that Paul Giamatti in that small but compelling role? He's done so many different things that you'd be hard-pressed to single out one film that epitomizes his style. Nobody is better at the cranky loner (*American Splendor*) or the luckless scrambler trying to hold his



In "Billions," Maggie Siff's character brokers an unlikely truce between longtime enemies played by Paul Giamatti and Damian Lewis.



On a mission: Giamatti's Chuck Rhoades from "Billions" (shown as U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of New York) is driven to win, no matter the cost.

own in a confusing world (*All Is Bright*). Dig a little deeper into the Giamatti filmography, however, and you find characters as diverse as the quietly authoritative police detective in *The Illusionist* or the seductive TV producer in *Barney's Version*.

He's as much at home as the irascible wine snob of *Sideways* as he is playing the good-guy wrestling coach in *Win Win*. He'll disappear into a real-life character like former Federal Reserve chairman Ben Bernanke (*Too Big to Fail*), then turn around and do a literary costume drama (*Madame Bovary*). He's played Santa Claus (*Fred Claus*), a Marvel villain plucked from the comics (*The Amazing Spider-Man 2*), a crucial Shakespearean character (*Romeo and Juliet*)—Giamatti has even played an actor named Paul Giamatti in the funny, strange *Cold Souls*.

If the man hasn't been film and TV's most valuable player for the past decade, he's certainly among the top contenders.

For a perfect example of Giamatti's ability to find humanity and humor in a cringe-worthy moment, look at a scene from the early going in 2018's *Private Life*. Giamatti and Kathryn Hahn play a married couple desperately and unsuccessfully trying to have a child. When a doctor suggests the husband's fertility may be the issue, Giamatti is sent off to produce a sperm sample. As '90s-era porn plays on a TV in his sterile little collection room, he

sits there, pants down, cup in hand, obviously not aroused, a look of resignation and futility on his face. He's ready to give up—but when he reaches for a remote to turn the video off, he instead seems able only to make the volume louder, stabbing at the remote frantically, to hilarious effect.

"Everything he does is done with such integrity and truth and longing and angst," Hahn says. "I had worshipped him from afar. People kept telling me, 'You're going to love him' and it was like walking into a friendship. I remember Tamara [Jenkins, director of *Private Life*] saying that watching Paul's face is like watching the weather. He's an incredible listener."

Casting directors tend to remember the more flamboyant roles, like the cartoonishly volatile bad guy in *Shoot 'Em Up* or the paranoid CEO in *Duplicity*. When he was being considered to play an amiable, upbeat driver for starchy Emma Thompson in *Saving Mr. Banks*, there was doubt. "They were concerned if I could seem like an ordinary, nice guy," Giamatti says. "Dustin Hoffman told me once that every actor has two characters in him—three, if he's lucky. Everything else is just a variation. People used to only see me for certain kinds of things—more depressed guys, at the start. Now I get more power-monger roles offered to me. I don't get offered that many leads, but the supporting stuff is intriguing and varied."

#A SMOKE THAT SHINES



#REDISCOVER JOYA



THE
MOST
Nicaraguan
CIGAR

   
@JOYACIGARS
JOYACIGARS.COM

Every character is distinctive, but his performances share a common feature: Giamatti's seamless transformation, to the benefit of the project around him. "You can't take your eyes off Paul Giamatti when he's performing," says director F. Gary Gray, who cast Giamatti in two films. "That's a very unique quality. You know he's giving his all. And he happens to be extremely entertaining."

Tom McCarthy, who cowrote and directed the Oscar-winning *Spotlight*, has known Giamatti since they were grad students at the Yale School of Drama: "I don't think I've considered a project where his name didn't come up," says McCarthy, who directed Giamatti in *Win Win*. "It's not just his range, it's the way he connects with material. It's about how literate he is and how he handles language. He can make even bad writing seem good."

Maggie Siff, who plays Giamatti's wife on "Billions," says Giamatti's talent comes without an ego. "As talented and powerful as he is, Paul is humble and self-effacing. He's the least hierarchical person I know. He's got a voracious appetite for work, a passion and a quick intelligence."

While the role of Chuck Rhoades wasn't written specifically for Giamatti, he was always the producers' first choice, say two of the show's cocreators, David Levien and Brian Koppelman. But Giamatti was involved with a pilot for another show and originally unavailable. When they heard that pilot didn't get picked up, Levien and Koppelman pounced, locking Giamatti down for their series.

"We'd seen him play those characters who get the short end of the stick, which he does so well," Levien says. "But in *The Illusionist*, he was playing a guy who was the smartest guy in the room, next to the Illusionist. That was when we saw he could play this kind of commanding figure. So for him to play a powerful prosecutor—a high-flying achiever—well, we felt we knew something other people didn't know."

"He has an incredible tool kit," says Koppelman. "He's a brilliant man, with a wicked sense of humor. Which dovetails nicely with Chuck Rhoades."

For its first three seasons, "Billions" pitted Giamatti's Rhoades against Bobby "Axe" Axelrod, played by Damian Lewis. Rhoades, U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of New York, wanted to

bring down the ruthless hedge-fund billionaire Axelrod. To make things interesting, Rhoades' wife, Wendy (Maggie Siff), works for Axe as his in-house shrink. By the end of the third season, both men had suffered serious career reversals and wound up as allies for the start of Season 4. But, Giamatti notes, they'd probably never be friends.

"The wife is the complicating factor," he says. "My guy is very





The Rhoades men, father and son, played by Giamatti and Jeffrey DeMunn. They fight, but agree on the finer points, including the charms of a great cigar.

jealous of that relationship between Axe and Wendy. Chuck and Axe are both super-Type A. Not being a Type A myself, I don't know how they'd get along. But they're both pragmatists. So each one recognizes the usefulness of the other."

And Mr. and Mrs. Rhoades are not your run-of-the-mill power couple. The very first shot of the show's pilot revealed that Chuck and Wendy's sex life was far from the mundane, and involved sadomasochism, with her as the dominatrix and him as the submissive. Playing that particular sexual twist with Giamatti is always educational, says Siff: "Paul has so much power as an actor but, from a professional perspective, he never feels dominant," she says. "His acts of submission on this show are so forceful that it makes the act of being dominated powerful and mind-bending."

For his part, Giamatti says that being trussed up as part of the Rhoades' bondage-and-domination rituals is actually relaxing. He's even been known to doze off between takes while tied up on the set. "It's akin to swaddling a baby," Giamatti hypothesizes. "Obviously, it's comforting, though probably not in the way most people think of comfort."

Like a number of characters he has played over the years, Chuck Rhoades indulges in cigars, usually with his power-broker

father (played by Jeffrey DeMunn). "I remember we shot a scene at Nat Sherman, because Jeff's character had a private humidor there," Giamatti says. "In fact, Jeff had a whole speech about cigars. It's definitely a cigar-y world. These are ostentatious, wealthy guys. Cigars are a symbol of their power and wealth."

The varied characters Giamatti has played approached cigars in different ways. The conniving movie producer Marty Wolf in *Big Fat Liar* lights a huge stogie, then uses it to ignite papers. In his Oscar-nominated role as boxing manager Joe Gould in *Cinderella Man*, he kept a cigar jammed in the corner of his mouth: "He was very feisty and old-school." And the aging womanizer in *Barney's Version*? "That guy smoked very self-indulgently."

Giamatti smokes on-screen, but not off. Cigars are props through which he helps both create and discover the character—in the same way he uses things like a cane, a pipe or a pair of glasses. "There is a way that it physically frees you up," he says. "It frees the mind and the body; it's very expressive." While researching America's second president to play him in *John Adams*, Giamatti says, "I came across this stray anecdote, which made a reference to Adams 'chain-smoking' cigars. So I talked to the show's period advisers about it. We decided he must have gotten them shipped to him from Holland. We finally settled on



THE WORLD'S Nº1 AÑEJO CRISTALINO TEQUILA

FOR THOSE WHO KNOW

THOSE WHO KNOW DRINK RESPONSIBLY. DON JULIO Tequila. 40% Alc/Vol. © 2019. Imported by Diageo Americas, Norwalk, CT.

LA AROMA DE CUBA®



A taste from another time



laaromadecuba.com

these little black cigars from Connecticut and I smoked them all the way through.”

“Billions” examines power in all its forms: how to get it, how hard it is to keep it and how it transforms the people it touches. Giamatti doesn’t pretend to understand the series’ serpentine saga of aggression, reversal and double-dealing. (“I can’t keep up with the plot,” he admits.) Still, he says, “It’s enhanced my understanding of the transactional nature of those worlds and how deep it goes. But that kind of thing exists in my profession as well.”

Being in a television series allows Giamatti regularly scheduled hiatuses, which he has used for other projects, starring in *Private Life* and playing supporting roles in films such as *The Catcher Was a Spy*, *The Phenom* and *Morgan*. He’ll be seen opposite Dwayne Johnson in next year’s *Jungle Cruise*. He also used some of the time to shepherd his son Samuel to look at colleges. Giamatti has been divorced from his ex Elizabeth for nearly a decade.

“If it’s possible, we’ve managed to have a happy divorce. We live in the same neighborhood and we’ll all have dinner together. It’s all very Brooklyn Heights, very ‘woke,’” he explains, arching a trademark eyebrow to mock himself.

In addition to his on-screen work, he’s also produced films and TV series (AMC’s “Lodge 49”). “There’s a certain satisfaction in helping to facilitate something, or to help a writer,” he says.

The alliance between former enemies Rhoades and Axelrod on Season 4 of “Billions” meant more scenes between Giamatti and Damian Lewis, who’d rarely shared the screen in the first three seasons.

That has renewed talk about Giamatti and Lewis doing a play together. At one point, a couple of years ago, the two floated the idea of hitting the boards in Neil Simon’s *The Odd Couple*. The casting seems obvious—or does it?

“Clearly, the obvious thing is for Paul to do the Walter Matthau role and Damian to play Felix,” Koppelman says. “But I think both could do either role.” Giamatti was a creature of the stage before he

“He has an incredible tool kit. He’s a brilliant man, with a wicked sense of humor.” —Brian Koppelman

moved into film: “I’ve never gotten the same satisfaction working in film that I get onstage,” he says. “But I’m more used to it now. I’m more in control, yet free at the same time. It’s funny and odd. But I would like to do theater again.” He last was on stage in 2013, when he played the title character in *Hamlet* at Yale Repertory Theater. The experience was both exhausting and enriching.

“I took away so much from that,” he says. “The major thing is that I think it’s actually a pitch-black comedy, a sick comedy. You can’t do it right without mining the comedy. I feel like I got about



40 percent of it right. It’s such an interesting part. As a stage play, it will always be a step ahead of us. And we’ll always be catching up...physically, I don’t think I could do it now. Stamina is hard.”

Giamatti is reminded of a scene from 2002, where he danced while clad only in a plaid Speedo. “Yeah, I was in very good shape then,” says Giamatti, whose body has lately trended more round. “I was swimming and doing yoga. Right now, I’m in better shape than I have been for a few years. I started doing yoga and exercising again, knowing I was going to need stamina for this series.”

Indeed, one of Giamatti’s secrets may be that he has, to a certain extent, looked middle-aged since his 20s. Now 51, he seems comfortable with just who he is.

“I never cared much about what I looked like,” he says. “I’m perfectly comfortable with it. Turning 50 was not bad. Although, physically, it was like someone flipped a switch and I started falling apart. Literally on my 50th birthday. Those biological milestones hit with real accuracy. But I think I’d rather be this age than 20 again, except physically.”

“When I was 20, I thought I knew everything. Now I know that I don’t know shit. And I’m more comfortable with that.” ❖

Contributing editor Marshall Fine is critic-in-residence at The Picture House Regional Film Center in Pelham, NY.



La Flor Dominicana

1994

THIS BLEND IS AS SPECIAL AS THE OCCASION
IT SERVES TO COMMEMORATE AND IS SYMBOLIC
OF THE QUALITY AND PRIDE WITH WHICH
LA FLOR DOMINICANA HAS BUILT ITS NAME.

AVAILABLE IN BOXES OF 20.

Follow us @LFDcigars  
www.laflordominicana.com



National

T R E A S U R E

8th Hole

The Monterey Peninsula is the stunning home to 18 of the grandest holes in golf, Pebble Beach Golf Links.

Pebble Beach, one of the world's most storied golf courses, celebrates 100 years as it hosts the U.S. Open in June

BY JEFF WILLIAMS



Off the back of the eighth tee at the Pebble Beach Golf Links, where the Pacific Ocean and the headland meet just above the teeming waters, an otter floats on its back, banging a rock against an abalone shell. Playful mammals like this one have sought their dinner here for millennia, without regard to who is passing by, just a sand wedge away. For the past century, those visitors have included Bobby Jones, Ben Hogan, Arnold Palmer, Jack Nicklaus and Tiger Woods, who have all come this way in search of trophies and championships. Bing Crosby, Bob Hope, Clint Eastwood, Jack Lemmon and Sean Connery have come this way, too, stars in search of a bauble or two and a few laughs along the way.

Amateur players of all calibre, whether they aspire to swing a club like Nicklaus or Woods or showcase the talent of Crosby or Hope, flock to Pebble Beach by the thousands each year to play what is fairly called America's national treasure of golf.

Tom Kite, a winner of the AT&T Pebble Beach National Pro-Am in 1983 and the U.S. Open at Pebble in 1992, spent his career marveling at this stretch of 18 holes on the Monterey Peninsula where ocean and land embrace. "Even when you are playing in a tournament, I don't think there is a player who doesn't just look out over the course and ocean and go 'wow,'" says Kite. "Of course it's a distraction. But what a distraction."

This year, Pebble Beach celebrates its 100th birthday, and what could be a more fitting party than the playing of the U.S. Open there this June, the sixth time the national championship will be conducted on this glorious ground.



Bobby Jones

"It's got to be a national treasure," says Mike Davis, CEO of the United States Golf Association. "Even if you ask non-golfers in this country to name a place or two in golf and they know nothing about the game, I'm hard-pressed to believe that Pebble Beach won't be one that comes up."

It's an historic course. An absolutely aesthetically gorgeous golf course. It's a wonderful test of golf."

Samuel F.B. Morse, the Duke of Del Monte, may not have seen this stretch of headland along Stillwater Cove and Carmel Bay as a test, but he did see it as a treat, and because of his foresight Pebble Beach ultimately took its place in golf's Valhalla.

When things were going from bad to worse during World War I for the Pacific Development Co., the entity that owned this precious land and had originally sought to build homes there, Morse was brought in to liquidate its holdings. Realizing what a special place it was, he eventually took control of the properties himself with the idea of building a golf course and selling lots to build bigger homes that overlook the area, hoping to attract vacationers to the log lodge that already existed. When Morse couldn't get iconic American golf course designer C.B. Macdonald to do the course, and the prolific Scottish architect Donald Ross was in the English army, he settled on two top California amateurs, Jack Neville and Douglas

Grant, to lay out the course that opened in 1919. There have been changes, principally by Chandler Egan in 1928, who turned the 18th (originally a short par 4) into the memorable par 5 that challenges amateurs and pros alike. Jack Nicklaus built the new par-3 fifth hole in 1997 and Arnold Palmer oversaw a few alterations. But the overall routing has been essentially the same for 90 years and has withstood whatever Mother Nature could throw its way.



17th Hole



Arrowhead Point

From the outset, Morse had grand plans for Pebble Beach. It was built at a time when virtually all the big-time tournament golf in the United States was played east of the Mississippi River. The USGA had never held one of its championships west of St. Louis. But Morse knew what he had and knew what he wanted and he convinced the USGA to hold the 1929 U.S. Amateur at Pebble Beach, a huge accomplishment. At the time, the Amateur was a significantly bigger deal than the Open. Bringing the Amateur to Pebble Beach meant bringing the immortal Bobby Jones to the West and all the national publications who followed the game's biggest star.

Neal Hotelling, the longtime historian of Pebble Beach, sees the 1929 Amateur as putting Pebble Beach on the championship map. "That the USGA finally came to California, the publicity around that was huge," says Hotelling. "The fact that Bobby Jones was playing in California and then lost in California made bigger headlines. Pebble Beach became a household name as a great golf course after the '29 Amateur."

Then came Bing Crosby. The man who crooned "Straight Down the Middle" is the man who brought his Bing Crosby National Pro-Am to Pebble Beach in 1947, creating a format of pros playing with amateurs all four days, putting up the \$5,000 purse himself and insisting that all ticket sales go to charity, essentially setting the framework for the game's charitable underpinning.

In 1958, the two primal forces of golf arrived at Pebble Beach to join Crosby and his celebrity friends—Arnold Palmer and television. Palmer was on the launch pad of his meteoric career (he would win his first Masters two months later) and with television honed in on his every move, Pebble Beach provided "The King" and the game with an unrivaled dramatic stage. "Bing got the tournament televised and Arnold Palmer became the most telegenic golfer of all time," says Hotelling. "It was kismet."

Palmer never won "The Crosby" or an Open at Pebble, but he did add to its lore. In 1967, he was a stroke out of the lead on Sunday playing the par-5 14th hole when he hit two consecutive 3-wood



BLENDING FOR SMOOTHNESS. AWARDED FOR QUALITY.



MULTI AWARD WINNING SCOTCH WHISKY





Bing Crosby & Bob Hope



Bing Crosby & Ben Hogan

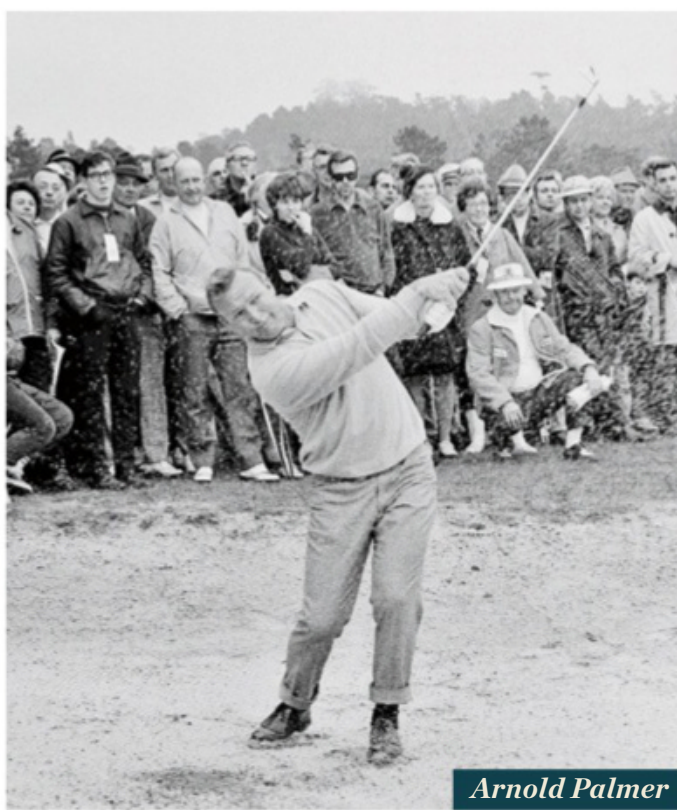
“It’s two different courses. In February, you have softer conditions and you know where your ball is going to stop. In an Open, the ball is going to bounce. You have to factor that, but you really can’t predict it.” –Phil Mickelson

approach shots that caromed off a tree short and right of the green. Both balls bounced out of bounds. He ended up finishing second. The tree? A storm blew it down that night.

Along came Jack Nicklaus to win the 1961 U.S. Amateur at Pebble and along came Nicklaus again in 1972 to win the first U.S. Open played on the course, a championship that would have longterm implications. It was the first Open played on a public-access golf course, one without a membership base that would usually handle all the volunteer aspects of running a tournament.

It was Morse who had fought hard to bring the Open to Pebble Beach, but he died in 1969 without seeing the USGA fulfill his dream. The organization was leery of bringing the championship to the site. “The USGA felt that it was too far away from any large metropolitan area with San Francisco being two-plus hours away, Los Angeles even farther,” says Hotelling. “Secondly, it was a public golf course. That continued to be a big concern for them. The biggest one was that USGA relied on the members to fill the volunteer positions and Pebble Beach didn’t have any members.”

Aime Michaud, Morse’s successor, got the job done, in part by guaranteeing revenue to the USGA. And Pebble has certainly become a darling of the U.S. Open. After that first Open in 1972,



Arnold Palmer

the Open would return again in 1982, 1992 and 2000, setting the precedent for the USGA to take it to another public access course, the Black Course at Bethpage State Park in New York, in 2002. When the Open returns in June, for the sixth time, it will put Pebble into a tie with Oakland Hills for third place among U.S. Open venues. Only Baltusrol (with seven Opens) and Oakmont (nine) will have hosted more.

Pebble Beach is really two different courses, one for the AT&T National Pro-Am in February during the rainy season, when the weather can come up fast and mimic Scotland, and one during a U.S. Open in June when it’s been dry and the course gets firm. Phil Mickelson is well acquainted with Pebble’s dual personality, having won his

fifth AT&T this past February and playing in every Open there since 1992. Mickelson’s grandfather, Al Santos, was an original caddie at Pebble, and Mickelson made his pro debut there in the ’92 Open.

“In February, you have softer conditions and you know where your ball is going to stop,” said Mickelson after his opening round at the AT&T this year. “In an Open here, the ball is going to bounce. It’s going to bounce on the fairways and the greens. You have to factor that, but you really can’t predict it. The greens are so small that coming out of the rough it’s very difficult to keep your ball on the green or get it close to the hole. It’s two different courses.”

Opens -to- Remember

On June 13, the U.S. Open will return to Pebble Beach for the sixth time. The previous Opens contested on these storied seaside holes have rarely disappointed, and have served as a gorgeous stage to some of the most memorable moments in golf.

1972

The first U.S. Open at Pebble Beach befit the grandeur of America's national treasure. The leaderboard had Jack Nicklaus, Arnold Palmer, Johnny Miller and Lee Trevino on it, proving that cream would rise to the top on this course.

A brisk wind off the ocean greeted the players for the final round on Sunday with Nicklaus in the lead. When he tapped in for birdie on the second hole he was up by three shots, but the Golden Bear sailed his drive on 10 onto the beach below the bluff, made double bogey, and let the chasers back into the tournament. But all hopes ended on the 17th. With the wind howling into him, Nicklaus stood on the tee box of that par 3, facing a 218-yard shot. He took a mighty swing with his 1-iron. The ball bored through the wind, landed a foot from the hole, hit the flag and dropped down inches away for a gimme birdie, which put the cap on Nicklaus' 13th major.



Jack Nicklaus

1982

This Open all came down to Nicklaus and Tom Watson on Sunday. The two were tied when Watson, playing in the final group, sank a 35-foot birdie putt on the 14th, going a shot up. Nicklaus, who was three holes ahead, had a chance to move into the lead on the final hole, facing an 18-footer for birdie, but he powered it through the break, and had to settle for par. Watson fell back into a tie with a bogey on 16, and things didn't look good for him when he pulled his tee shot on the 17th into the thick collar rough to the left of the hole, leaving him a delicate downhill chip.

"Get it close," said his caddy, Bruce Edwards. "I'm going to sink it," said Watson.

And darned if he didn't. And darned if he didn't make birdie on the 18th for a two-shot win and his sole U.S. Open title.

1992

Most of the talk entering this Open centered around the prospects of Greg Norman, Nick Faldo, Fred Couples and a host of other big names, including a heralded amateur named Phil Mickelson, who made his professional debut at Pebble. Lefty shot a 68 in

the first round, then an 81 the second day to miss the cut. Few were talking about Tom Kite, the solid professional who had made the cut at Pebble Beach as an amateur in 1972. But Kite was high up on the leaderboard as the Sunday round began, a shot behind the leader, Dr. Gil Morgan.

Cloudy skies were predicted for the final round, but as the sun started to shine through, the winds started to blow. Colin Montgomerie, who had started hours ahead of the leaders, finished with even par 288 and was the leader in the clubhouse. Nicklaus, in the commentary booth for ABC, predicted that Montgomerie would win.

Kite's windblown 6-iron to the iconic short par-3 seventh bounced into the rough left of the green, maybe 35 feet from the hole. His chip was pure as could be, hopping twice then rolling straight in for a birdie. After he birdied the 12th, Kite held a four-shot lead, which dropped to two after bogeys at 16 and 17. But his superb par on the 18th was all he needed to collect his sole major championship.

2000

This was the Tiger Woods Open. It was flat-out no contest. With Woods at the height of his powers, he conquered the course and destroyed the field with a display of golf that might never again be matched.

Woods opened with a six-under-par 65, a shot up on Miguel Ángel Jiménez. A second round 69 put him six shots ahead. As the weather conditions got testier on Saturday, Woods' lead ballooned to 10 after he shot a 71. Ernie Els moved into second place, but he was effectively four cars behind Woods' locomotive. A 67 in the final round gave Woods a total of 272 and all-time record 15-shot victory. This was Woods' first U.S. Open win, and the start of what became known as the Tiger Slam. He would go on to win the British Open and PGA Championship in 2000 and the Masters in 2001, holding all four major trophies at once.

2010

The two players in the final pairing on Sunday at this U.S. Open couldn't have been more different. The big-hitting Dustin Johnson and the precision-playing Graeme McDowell went off together with Johnson holding a three-shot lead. Johnson, then a star in the making, seemed likely to etch his name on his first major championship trophy.

Then Johnson blew up. On the second hole, his approach shot into heavy rough with a terrible stance lead to a triple bogey seven. On the third, he drastically pulled his drive, lost the ball in the hazard and went on to make double. D.J. stumbled his way to a final-round flameout of 82.

Playing alongside him, McDowell was just trying to stay steady. When he made bogeys on the ninth and 10th, he was surprised to see that he led by two shots, the closest player to him the unheralded Frenchman Grégory Havret. McDowell held his nerve, posted a 74 and walked away with his sole major.



CHANGE YOUR POINT OF VIEW



NEW *to the* **FAMILY**, ALEC BRADLEY *Magic Toast*.

►► Available at the finest tobacconists worldwide.

**ALEC
BRADLEY**
LIVE TRUE.

Visit us at alecbradley.com or [f/alecbradleycigar](https://www.facebook.com/alecbradleycigar) [@alecbradleycigar](https://www.instagram.com/alecbradleycigar) [@alecbradley](https://twitter.com/alecbradley)



ELS FOR AUTISM
2019 GOLF CHALLENGE

2019 ELS FOR AUTISM™ GOLF CHALLENGE SCHEDULE

The 2019 Els for Autism Golf Challenge consists of 14 regional events across the United States.

**01
APRIL** **Fazio Foothills Golf Course**
Austin, TX
Entry Fee: \$650

**15
APRIL** **The Stadium Course at
TPC Scottsdale**
Scottsdale, AZ
Entry Fee: \$650

**29
APRIL** **Duke University Golf Club**
Durham, NC
Entry Fee \$600

**01
MAY** **Old Marsh Golf Club**
Palm Beach Gardens, FL
Entry Fee: \$725

**03
JUNE** **Windsong Farm Golf Club**
Maple Plain, MN
Entry Fee: \$600

**10
JUNE** **TPC Sugarloaf**
Duluth, GA
Entry Fee: \$950

**01
JULY** **Philadelphia Country Club**
Gladwyne, PA
Entry Fee: \$1,000

**05
AUG** **Caves Valley Golf Club**
Owings Mills, MD
Entry Fee: \$1,200

**12
AUG** **The Club at Snoqualmie Ridge**
Snoqualmie, WA
Entry Fee: \$650

**19
AUG** **Conway Farms Golf Club**
Lake Forest, IL
Entry Fee \$950

**26
AUG** **Harbour Town Golf Links**
Hilton Head Island, SC
Entry Fee \$650

**29
AUG** **CordeValle Golf Club**
San Martin, CA
Entry Fee \$1,100

**09
SEPT** **The Club at Carlton Woods**
The Woodlands, TX
Entry Fee \$650

**17
SEPT** **Trump National Golf Club
Bedminster**
Bedminster, NJ
Entry Fee \$1,500

Up for the Challenge?

FIND OUT MORE AND
REGISTER AT E4AGOLF.COM



THANK YOU TO THE
2019 GOLF CHALLENGE SPONSORS

Wine Spectator

Presented By





Lodge at Pebble Beach

Playing Pebble

One of the beauties of Pebble Beach is that the average golfer can play it. As a resort course, it's technically open to anyone who has the means to afford it. But the price to play where Jack hit that famous 1-iron and Tiger tamed the field is more complicated than just fronting the considerable \$495 to \$525 greens fee.

To play Pebble Beach Golf Links, the 18 holes

where the U.S. Open will return for a sixth time in June, it helps to stay on property, and one night won't do it. Depending on the time of year, a two- or three-night minimum stay is required. Staying at the Lodge at Pebble Beach, the Inn at Spanish Bay or Casa Palmero near the Lodge allows for booking tee times far in advance (18 months out for the Lodge or the Inn at Spanish Bay, a year in advance for Casa Palmero). Those who don't stay, or only stay

one night, can book a tee time 24 hours in advance, and those slots fill up. Booking far ahead is key, and it's advised to reserve your caddy in advance as well. The fall tends to be the busiest time of the year, but Pebble is busy all year round, so it's wise to plan far ahead.

Several golf packages (which start north of \$2,000 per person) are available that include a round at Pebble and its sister courses Spyglass Hill or the Links at Spanish Bay.

But one incredibly attractive destination, The Lodge at Pebble Beach, has long held its own sensual allure. On the run-up to this year's Open, the Pebble Beach Co. hasn't stood still in reimagining its property. The Fairway One complex along the course's first hole opened in 2017 with 30 guest rooms and two four-bedroom residences, the Eastwood and Palmer cottages. The Visitor Center, opened last November, is a place where anyone can learn about the resort's history. You don't have to be a resort guest to visit, but you do have to be a multi-night resort guest to land the most coveted tee times. (See "Playing Pebble," above).

David Stivers, president of the Pebble Beach Co., knew he was in an enviable situation when he attended a board meeting 20 years ago, looking across the table at a host of famous faces: Arnold Palmer, the head of Arnie's Army and one of the most storied golfers of all time. Clint Eastwood, Dirty Harry himself. Former Major League Baseball Commissioner Peter Ueberroth and his associate Dick Ferris. These men had led a group of investors who bought Pebble Beach in 1999.

"They bought it with one of the main goals to preserve this as an iconic treasure for America forever," says Stivers. The goal was



Tom Watson

to ensure it never went to another ownership group. "That sentiment," Stivers adds, "holds true today."

When it comes to change at Pebble Beach, caution and consideration are the bywords. "When we look at things like rooms renovation or adding a new facility like the visitors center, we are always looking at it through the lens of 'is this going to make Pebble Beach better? Is it consistent with what Pebble Beach stands for?'" says Stivers. "So when you look at things with that lens, it helps you stay grounded doing things for this company and this golf resort."

Singer/songwriter Darius Rucker, the frontman for Hootie and the Blowfish, is a regular in the AT&T Pro-Am. Waiting to hit his shot on the seventh tee this February, the iconic green framed by the ocean, Rucker

summed up the Pebble Beach experience.

"It's just a mind-blowing place to play," says Rucker. "It was so different from what you see on television. I mean it's beautiful, but when you get out here and see all those famous holes and the ocean, you look around and say my God!" ❖

Jeff Williams is a CIGAR AFICIONADO contributing editor.



TAVICUSA

CELEBRATING TEN YEARS
OF NICARAGUAN EXCELLENCE

Rocky Patel
WWW.ROCKYPATEL.COM



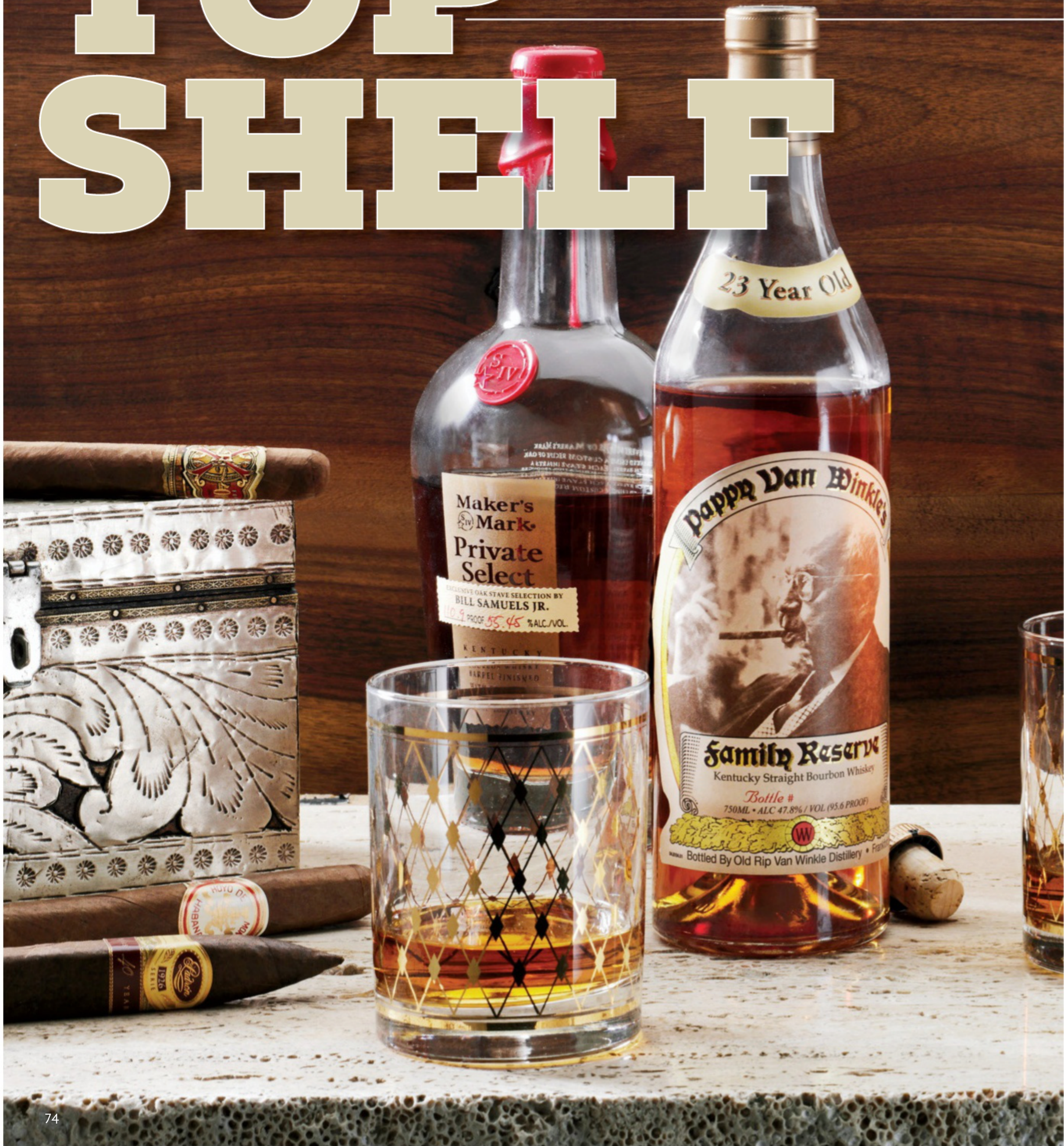
ROCKYPATELPREMCIGARS



@ROCKYPATELCIGAR



TOP SHELF



The market for rare, collectible Bourbon is growing ever hotter, with some whiskeys selling for thousands of dollars per bottle

BY JACK BETTRIDGE

PHOTOGRAPH BY JEFF HARRIS



Suppose your rich uncle—or distant great grandfather—had been a liquor dealer with the foresight to lay in cases of Bourbon and rye just before Prohibition made them illegal to buy. And then imagine that almost 100 years later, hidden behind bookshelves in his house, you discovered his secret bank vault containing a huge part of that cache.

That was the windfall that greeted the heirs of the California builder, banker and liquor merchant Jean-Baptiste Leonis when his secret trove was discovered in 2017. Many would have dipped straight in, but instead these historic pours made it to Christie's auction house. What happened next made the market stand up and take notice. An auction of the goods in December saw most of the lots attract prices that stunned the experts. Nine quarts of Old Style Brookhill Sour Mash, distilled by J.H. Beam, an uncle of Jim Beam, sold for \$26,950. Three quarts of Old Crow went for \$9,188. Just two quarts of Old Taylor matched that price. The auction opened with five quarts of a bygone rye whiskey, named Hermitage, selling for \$22,050.

"We put some estimates on them that we thought were quite normal," says Chris Munro, the head of the spirits department at Christie's. "And then the market went crazy for them."

The market has been heating up for collectible whiskey for years, especially after spirits auctions were legalized in New York in 2007. But the hot action had long centered on Scotch, which for reasons of aging conditions can offer eye-popping age statements, reaching into six decades. Today, that ardor has spread to Bourbon as well—and not only those from the days before Prohibition.

Pappy Van Winkle's Family Reserve dominates the collectible Bourbon category, especially since it comes in age designations of 20 and 23 years (ancient by Bourbon standards) and has become all-but-impossible to find in retail shops, bars and cocktail

lounges. When Pappy shows up at auction, the prices soar. A recent sale saw the gavel fall for \$1,872 and \$2,964, respectively, for Van Winkle 20- and 23-year-old Bourbons, whiskeys that would sell at retail for \$150 and \$250—if one could find them.

Daniel Lam of the Wine & Whisky Department of Bonhams' Hong Kong location, says that while historic Bourbons are still very important, sales of modern, hard-to-obtain bottles are up. And while you're unlikely to inherit a stash of old Bourbons, you'll find that major distilleries have limited-edition offerings (some only available at the source) that can anchor a Bourbon collection to give your guests a unique experience.

Pappy Van Winkle, bottled with the distinctive image of an old man in a suit and vest with eyeglasses, smoking a thin cigar, is the most celebrated Bourbon to be made at the Buffalo Trace distillery, in Frankfort, Kentucky. Operating since (at least) 1812 under various names, the facility holds some of the most storied brand names in Bourbon—including E.H. Taylor, George T. Staggs and William Larue Weller. It also never shuttered for Prohibition, as it was licensed to make the "medicinal purposes" bottlings that are now so collectible. Van Winkle is now made and stored here by contract. The brand originally was developed by procuring extra-old barrels that were unused by other distilleries, one of them presumably being Buffalo Trace.

But Van Winkle is hardly the distillery's only notable product. The distiller has become well known for its experiments, among them the Single Oak Project, in which consumers voted on casks made from 96 oak trees of different origins and ring densities. With a retail price of \$46 a half-bottle, some of the singular expressions have been auctioned for nearly triple that amount.

Not as well known as Van Winkle, but able to tout similar age statements—and similar attention at auction—is Michter's. Its limited-edition bottles with age statements as old as 20 and 25 years are particularly collectible, reports Lam. A 20-year-old



A treasure-trove of Prohibition-era whiskey that sold for eye-popping prices in December.

COURTESY OF CHRISTIE'S



Jimmy Russell (above) has been working at Wild Turkey for 65 years. At right, a lineup of once forgotten Bourbons, from the Orphan Barrel line.

Michter's sold for \$2,340 at auction in Hong Kong last August. But that pales in comparison to the brand's priciest offering—Michter's Celebration Sour Mash Whiskey, an extremely limited edition. The last edition, released in 2016, was priced at \$5,000 per bottle, with only 256 bottles released.

Back in the 1990s, Michters didn't have a distillery. Instead, it procured select casks at a time when Bourbon and rye were not in great demand. Soon, however, it began having its whiskey made by other distillers according to its specified recipes. In 2015, Michter's opened its own distillery in a converted GM auto parts plant in Louisville, where it controls all aspects of production. In a sense, the brand has ties to an old Pennsylvania rye distillery, dating from 1753, because whiskey of the same name had once been made at the site. (That facility closed in 1989, and the current iteration of Michter's was never made there.) The parent company of the new Michter's chose to move production to Kentucky because of the state's concentration of suppliers. As well as having state-of-the-art equipment, the distillery keys on using high-quality barrels and pays a premium for them.

The "lost barrel" story is one that is tossed around quite a bit in the whiskey world. It refers to a cask that was somehow mislaid in the warehouse and then discovered when it reached a ripe old age—presumably in peak condition. The Orphan Barrel project from spirits giant Diageo is a version on that, except that the barrels that created it were not lost, but more accurately abandoned. The whiskey's wending history begins in 1935 with the founding of the Stitzel-Weller distillery, just outside of Louisville.



Among other brands, it made Old Fitzgerald and W.L. Weller. The distillery was sold in 1972, and passed through a number of owners before being shuttered in the early 1990s, a time when Bourbon was underappreciated in the United States, and a time when old barrels of the whiskey were not the coveted items they are today. Diageo bought the property, and with it came a wealth of aged whiskey that had been left unwanted. In 2014, Diageo began bottling those old, forgotten barrels under the brand name Orphan Barrel. Limited releases were made under various subtitles with ages ranging from 19 to 28 years. Orphan Barrel Rhetoric, for example, has come out in several versions, each of them at least 20 years old. The Orphan Barrel 24 launched last summer, with a suggested retail price of \$130. A limited-edition collection of six Orphan Barrel bottles, representing 132 years combined age, was released in 2017 for \$1,500.

Another distillery that is drawing the attention of collectors is Louisville's Bernheim distillery, which has been owned by

Heaven Hill since 1999. Two special releases from Bernheim—Elijah Craig Barrel Proof (12 years) and Old Fitzgerald Bottled-in-Bond (13 years)—have become highly sought after. Heaven Hill 27, made at the company's old distillery, debuted at \$400, but has already sold at auction for double that, \$800.

Many date the trend of superpremium Bourbon to the early 1990s, when brands like Booker's, Knob Creek and Blanton's debuted with small batches and single barrels. But as early as the 1950s—long before the term “small batch” was coined—Maker's Mark bet that people would spend more for a better product. Besides refurbishing an antique distillery in a pastoral location, the company introduced a wheat recipe and intensely rotated casks in the warehouse for uniform aging. For decades, Maker's



Departed legends Elmer T. Lee (above) and Parker Beam (right) saw the ups and downs of Bourbon.

had only one standard release in their portfolio, except for a high-strength version (95 proof) available only in Asia, which draws auction interest. Today, customers can buy a cask strength version (108–114 proof, \$50) and retailers have the option of the Private Select program, whereby retailers buy an entire barrel (\$13,000) at cask strength and then customize finishing from a selection of five stave wood types. The per bottle suggested retail price is \$70.

For Jim Beam, the world's largest Bourbon distillery, rotating barrels throughout the warehouses is impractical. After all, they add a half million casks a year to their inventory, storing close to 1.9 million at any time. So years ago when distilling legend Booker Noe was asked to come up with superpremium products, he simply set out to find the warehouse crannies that aged the best liquor. He did this by locating the hoses that workers had hidden to sneak sips out of the best casks: a crude, but effective, focus group. It turned out they were stored mainly in the center of north-facing warehouses. He passed the knowledge to his son, Fred, who is now master distiller in charge of picking those “honey barrels.” The company now annually adds further limited releases of uncut and unfiltered Bourbon, called Booker's Batch Collection. There's also a market for collecting vintage Jim Beam decanters that were made in the shape of cars and trains and even Elvis. But those who take the Jim Beam American Stillhouse tour,

representing a bit of brand history that's not to be overlooked, can buy a 375-mm bottle of Old Tub, a tribute to a pre-Prohibition brand that is only available in the visitor's center.

A handful of legendary master distillers like Noe, Parker Beam at Heaven Hill and Elmer T. Lee at Buffalo Trace acted as links to the time when Bourbon was king. The men also lived through the spirit's down times, which started in the 1970s, and the whiskey's resurgence in the 1990s. Still reminding us of that heritage is Jimmy Russell at Wild Turkey. As much as his friend Booker was an outsized personality, Russell is a beatific Buddha overlooking his domain even as he chalks up his 65th (and counting) year at the same distillery where he started working as a 17-year-old. Never flashy, but always amicable, he and his son Eddie are now

co-master distillers. Some of their most collectible productions include the Master's Keep series (\$150). It currently numbers three releases, the latest version of which is a nod not only to Jimmy's long career, but his long championing of the 101 proof standard that so many of his whiskeys have upheld. The second, called Decades, showcases Eddie Russell's skill with a melding of whiskeys between 10 and 20 years old.

The Four Roses distillery in nearby Lawrenceburg, Kentucky, possesses a long history that was long obscured. When Seagram's bought the plant in the 1940s, it ceased selling its standout straight Bourbon whiskey in the United States, replacing it with a subpar blend. In the 1990s, it resumed sale in small allotments in Kentucky, but the Bourbon was still by definition a collectible. Finally, the Japanese brewery Kirin bought the distillery and started widespread sales in America. The whiskeys are delicious, but there's one collectible iteration that's particularly hard to get: the barrel-strength Four Roses Single Barrel Private Selection, which is something that can only be bought at the distillery store.

Woodford Reserve is made at the same site where the sour-mash process was pioneered, as the distillery has roots that reach far back into the history of Bourbon. The present owner is still innovating, using three copper pot stills, the kind of thing you expect from Scottish single-malt whisky makers, not Bourbon men. Woodford's think-outside-the-box culture has done nothing but grow, and there's a particularly collectible whiskey produced by its sister brand Old Forester in Louisville. (Both companies are owned by spirits giant Brown-Forman.) Once a year, Old Forester remembers the founder George Garvin Brown with its Birthday Bourbon, a melding of casks distilled and barreled on one particular day. Obviously, that condition makes it a highly limited release. And while this whiskey sells for a relatively affordable \$60 a bottle upon release, a set of three from separate years recently sold at auction for the considerable sum of \$2,500.

As it turns out maybe you don't need a rich uncle to get your hands on unique Bourbon. ♦

F55 New Look



Quattro Original

#2 *Top25*
Year 2013



Quattro Nicaragua

March 2019
cigar
aficionado

Aging Room Quattro

In Rafael Nodal's Aging Room Quattro Series you will find the perfect chord: the best tobaccos, quality production, experience, and inspiration. Rafael Nodal has made the cigar maker a composer, creating evocative melodies in the tune of tobacco. These four cigars will wrap your senses with memories of Cuba and a master's experience in the world of tobacco. Aging Room Quattro Series. Make them sound.

SURGEON GENERAL WARNING:
Cigar Smoking Can Cause Lung
Cancer And Heart Disease.

Rafael Nodal

Tickets Are Now On Sale!

WhiskyFest

The Leading Whisky Festival in North America

The Wine Spectator California Scholarship Foundation presents:

SAN FRANCISCO
October 4, 2019

NEW YORK
December 3, 2019



Enjoy a night of good whiskies, good food
and good friends at WhiskyFest.

- Taste from a selection of more than 350 whiskies from around the world.
- Meet the distillers and master blenders.
- Attend in-depth seminars by whisky experts—no additional cost!
- Enjoy a gourmet buffet all evening.
- Special Bonus: Receive a one-year subscription to Whisky Advocate magazine*.

**Great
Gift Idea for
Father's Day**

Sponsored by
Whisky
ADVOCATE

* Current subscriptions will be extended.

Over 350 whiskies will be poured. It's a great time to find a new favorite!

1000 Stories	Glen Grant	Mossburn	Tincup
1792	Glenfiddich	Nikka	Tomatin
A.D. Laws	The Glenlivet	Old Ezra	Tyrconnell
A. Smith Bowman	Glenmorangie	Old Fitzgerald	Weller
Ardbeg	Gooderham & Worts	Old Pulteney	Westland
Arran	Hakushu	Old Rip Van Winkle	Wheatley Vodka
Balblair	Hatozaki	Pappy Van Winkle	WhistlePig
The Balvenie	Heaven Hill	Parker's	Widow Jane
Blackened American	Heaven's Door	Paul John	Wild Turkey
Blanton's	Henry McKenna	Pike Creek	Woodford Reserve
Blood Oath	High West	Pikesville	Yamazaki
Bowmore	Hillrock Estate	Readbreast	Yellowstone
Brenne	Hotaling & Co.	The Real McCoy	
Bruichladdich	J.P. Wiser's	Rebel Yell	
Buffalo Trace	Jack Daniel's	Russell's Reserve	
Bushmills	Jim Beam	Sagamore Spirit	
Compass Box	Johnnie Walker	Sazerac	
David Nicholson Reserve	Kavalan	The Sexton	
Dewar's	Kilbeggan	Speyburn	
Dingle Distillery	Knappogue Castle	Stagg Jr.	
Eagle Rare	Laphroaig	Stranahan's	
Elijah Craig	Lot 40	Talisker	
Few Spirits	Larceny	Taylor	
Four Roses	Maker's Mark	Templeton Rye	
	Michter's	Thomas Handy Rye	



*Whisky list is subject to change.
Not all whiskies available in all cities.*

Take Advantage of Early Bird Prices Order Tickets at WhiskyFest.com

Early Bird pricing available for a limited time only.

cigar aficionado #1
Cigar
of the Year
2018

*Perez
Carrillo*
Encore

PEREZ
CARRILLO

Encore 96
RATED



CARRILLO

WWW.EPCARRILLO.COM

@epcarrillo_cigars

EPcarrillo

/epcarrillo



Pelota in the Sun

Baseball is the supreme sport in the Dominican Republic, and the small country has created more major leaguers than any nation outside the United States

BY KENNETH SHOULER

The sun beats down, punishing green and brown ballfields. The image is every bit as familiar as the strains of meringue and salsa rising from the dusty alleys. It is said that life in the Dominican Republic follows four principles: God, country, liberty and baseball. Not necessarily in that order. *Pelota*, another word for “baseball,” challenges that pecking order every month of the year.

Long after Major League Baseball cedes its summer dominance to brown leaves and chilled air, the crack of ball meeting ash echoes across the verdant fields of this Caribbean country. Some say baseball is in the blood of Dominicans, who may start playing at the age of three.

José Ramírez recalls his youth. “This is a juice box,” he says, holding up a small, waxy carton. “After we drank all the juice, we would fold it tightly and use it as a ball to play.” A piece of wood the width of a broom handle was secured as a bat. Born in the southern region of Baní, Ramírez made his major league debut in 2013, at the age of 20, and has been a Cleveland Indian ever since. His rise has been meteoric. The brawny, 5’9” third baseman has been an All-Star twice and has hit more



Juan Marichal



José Ramírez



home runs and driven in more runs each season than he did the one before. When he returns to his hometown, he is trailed through his old streets by children, an inspiration for Dominicans seeking fame and fortune.

Dominican baseball is a tale of high hopes. Teenage prospects are signed to one of 30 “academies,” one for each major league team, and hone their talents longing to catch the eye of scouts. Baseball has been called a game of failure; even the immortal players fail to get a hit seven out of every 10 at bats. Here, it’s a different degree of failure: just two percent of all players signed to an academy will reach the majors.

This country of just 10.8 million residents is second only to the U.S. in creating professional ballplayers. All told, more than 700 players from the Dominican Republic have played Major League Baseball. And with 102 players born in the Dominican Republic

“All we wanted to do was play ball. We made our own bats with branches. For gloves, we would take a piece of canvas and then sew up the sides.”

—Juan Marichal

playing on major league teams this year, roughly 10 percent of current major league players are Dominican. One city alone, San Pedro de Macorís, known as “the Cradle of Shortstops,” has produced 76 major leaguers. Success stories abound, and stars with Dominican heritage have been playing in the majors for more than 50 years, from Juan Marichal to Pedro Martínez, Vladimir Guerrero to Albert Pujols, Adrián Beltré and so many more.

Baseball was first played in the Dominican capital of Santo Domingo in June 1891, when Cuban brothers Ignacio and Ubaldo Aloma organized two teams. In 1956, Osvaldo Virgil (known better as “Ozzie”), a native of Monte Cristi and a graduate of DeWitt

Clinton High School in the Bronx, became the first Dominican player to sport a major league uniform when he debuted for the New York Giants at the age of 24. The journeyman third baseman would play for five teams in an undistinguished, nine-year career.

The next native of note so outshone the rest that he is still revered as “The Dominican Dandy.” Growing up on a farm in Laguna Verde, then a city of about 450 people, Juan Marichal recalls: “All we wanted to do was play ball. We made our own bats with branches that we cut from the gaussia tree and dried in the sun. For gloves, we would take a piece of canvas, the kind of stuff they used to cover trucks, and fold it around a piece of cardboard and then sew up the sides. And for balls, we would get some golf balls from the golf course at Manzanillo and wrap nylon stocking or tape around them, and then take them to the shoemaker who would sew a leather cover around them.”

Known for his high leg kick and a wide palette of pitches and speeds, Marichal tossed a one-hitter in his debut with San Francisco against Philadelphia on July 19, 1960. The Giants rewarded him with a generous contract for \$12,000 the next year. Over a decade rich in pitching, Marichal won 191 games, more than any hurler in the 1960s.

A few years later, a singular event occurred. On September 15, 1963, San Francisco’s Felipe Alou, who hailed from Bajos de Haina, was playing right field with future Hall of Famers Willie McCovey in left and Willie Mays in center. When the Giants scored five runs to take an 8-3 lead, manager Alvin Dark substituted Felipe’s younger brother Jesus for McCovey. After the Giants scored four more to mount a 12-3 lead, Dark replaced Mays in center with Felipe’s other younger brother Matty. “It was history,” Mays said. The image staggers the mind still: three brothers who once slept side by side in a 15-by-15-foot shack now stood side by side in a major league outfield for the defending National League champions.

The baseball success stories from the Dominican Republic run the gamut from legendary to average, with many more to come. ❖

The five keys that hang from the front door at Stitzel-Weller Distillery not only symbolize the five steps of whiskey-making, but also our rich history of hospitality.

Welcome to Stitzel-Weller

A FINE FORM OF HOSPITALITY

Every day we hang the five keys on our door as an invitation to experience some of the oldest and rarest remaining stocks that make up Blade and Bow Kentucky Straight Bourbon Whiskey.

BLADEANDBOWWHISKEY.COM



PLEASE SIP RESPONSIBLY. BLADE AND BOW Kentucky Straight Bourbon Whiskey. 45.5% Alc/Vol. Stitzel-Weller Distilling Co., Louisville, KY.

CIGAR AFICIONADO'S

BIG SMOKE

LAS VEGAS WEEKEND

THE MIRAGE

November 15-17, 2019

YES
YOU CAN
SMOKE!



The Big Smoke weekend is a jam-packed cigar experience! The three-day event includes two Big Smoke evenings featuring a fantastic line-up of premium cigars to collect and enjoy, plus exciting daytime seminars with Cigar Aficionado editors and renowned cigarmakers.

TICKETS ON SALE NOW AT LASVEGASBIGSMOKE.COM

Ultimate Weekend for Cigar Lovers

ALL ACCESS PACKAGE

Daytime Sit-Down Seminars
+ 2 Big Smoke Evenings (VIP)

\$875

**BEST
BUY**

WEEKEND PACKAGE

Daytime Sit-Down Seminars
+ 1 Big Smoke Evening (VIP)

\$675

BIG SMOKE EVENINGS

VIP Admission **\$375**
General Admission **\$325**



BIG SMOKE EVENINGS November 15th and November 16th 5:30-9:30 PM

Join us for one (or two!) Big Smoke Evening events in the Mirage Event center. Enjoy collecting 30+ premium cigars, sipping cocktails, spirits and beer, mingling with cigarmakers and smoking with friends. Cigar Aficionado canvas tote bag included with every ticket!

CIGAR SEMINARS November 16th and November 17th

Enjoy two days of sit-down cigar and tobacco related seminars featuring Cigar Aficionado's editors and renowned cigarmakers from across the industry. Seminars include the Top 3 Cigars of 2018, cigar and spirit pairings and more!

For hotel information and to purchase tickets, visit

LASVEGASBIGSMOKE.COM

Seminar Program and 2019 Cigar List Coming Soon

For my humidor,
I use Boveda.

ERNESTO PEREZ-CARRILLO



CIGAR AFICIONADO
#1 CIGAR OF THE YEAR
ENCORE MAJESTIC



TRYBOVEDA.COM



@bovedainc



@bovedainc



@bovedausa



cigars

- 90 CIGAR REVIEWS**
We purchased 80 handmade cigars, stripped them of their identifying bands, and passed them out to our panel of cigar-smoking experts to see how they perform under fire.
- 102 THE CIGAR AFICIONADO BUYING GUIDE**
Top scores, best buys and cigars sorted by strength provide you with a superior guide to cigar-shop humidors.
- 104 VINTAGE TASTE TEST**
Our Connoisseur's Corner shows how well great cigars can age, including an extra long Romeo y Julieta and a Cuban rolled more than 30 years ago.
- 106 THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC'S BIGGEST FACTORY**
Tabacalera de Garcia has been rolling cigars for 50 years. Today, it's the largest cigar factory in a country known for cigar factories, and it produces Montecristos, Romeo y Julietas and many more handmade smokes.
- 112 BIG SMOKE AT THE HARD ROCK**
More than 1,000 cigar lovers from all over the United States and around the world partied at the Hard Rock.
- 117 HABANOS DAY**
Habanos S.A. is bringing Cuba on the road, complete with cigars and rum.

churchills

The La Flor Dominicana 1994 Mambo scored 91 points and shows how versatile a Mexican wrapper can be. While it's common to see Mexican wrapper blended with Nicaraguan tobacco, brand-owner Litto Gomez put one around an all-Dominican blend, and the result was fantastic. The year 1994 commemorates the year Gomez began making cigars. Three cigars scored 90 points, and stylistically, they couldn't be more different. The Kristoff Connecticut Churchill is covered in an Ecuador Connecticut wrapper while the New World Cameroon Selection Churchill is wrapped in a leaf of Cameroon. Always a classic, the Cuban Romeo y Julieta Churchill is emblematic of the size.



DOMINICAN REPUBLIC
RING GAUGE: 54 LENGTH: 7"
FILLER: DOM. REP.
BINDER: DOM. REP.
WRAPPER: MEXICO

LA FLOR DOMINICANA 1994 MAMBO
Large and imposing with an even draw and burn, this cigar forms a sturdy ash. Initial notes of earth and minerals become more complex with leather, almonds and chocolate-covered raisins.
U.S.: \$8.80 U.K.: N/A STRENGTH: Medium

91



DOMINICAN REPUBLIC
RING GAUGE: 50 LENGTH: 7"
FILLER: DOM. REP.
BINDER: NICARAGUA
WRAPPER: ECUADOR

KRISTOFF CONNECTICUT CHURCHILL
A tan Churchill with a closed foot and knotted pigtail cap. First puffs are creamy, sweet and nutty like a pecan sandie cookie. Hints of wood and vanilla support the core of nutty sweetness.
U.S.: \$8.95 U.K.: N/A STRENGTH: Mild-Medium

90



NICARAGUA
RING GAUGE: 48 LENGTH: 7"
FILLER: NICARAGUA
BINDER: NICARAGUA
WRAPPER: CAMEROON

NEW WORLD CAMEROON SELECTION CHURCHILL
This long, box-pressed cigar is draped in a toothy cover leaf. Its sweet and spicy smoke takes on pleasant notes of oak and orange peel.
U.S.: \$6.50 U.K.: N/A STRENGTH: Medium

90



CUBA
RING GAUGE: 47 LENGTH: 7"
FILLER: CUBA
BINDER: CUBA
WRAPPER: CUBA
BOX DATE: DECEMBER 2017

ROMEO Y JULIETA CHURCHILL
Tan and box-pressed with a flat head and four-seam cap. Though the draw is firm, it still delivers plenty of toasty, nutty smoke, taking on a rich cappuccino quality and a saffron finish.
U.S.: N/A U.K.: £28.80 STRENGTH: Medium

90



NICARAGUA
RING GAUGE: 54 LENGTH: 7"
FILLER: NICARAGUA
BINDER: NICARAGUA
WRAPPER: NICARAGUA

PERDOMO RESERVE CHAMPAGNE NOIR CHURCHILL
A large cigar whose even draw and burn produces a solid ash. Woody and minty at first, the smoke becomes leathery, carrying notes of nougat and toast.
U.S.: \$9.00 U.K.: N/A STRENGTH: Medium-Full

89



U.S.A.
RING GAUGE: 47 LENGTH: 7"
FILLER: NICARAGUA
BINDER: NICARAGUA
WRAPPER: ECUADOR

TATUAJE RESERVA SW
This long, oily and reddish-brown cigar is attractive, with a leathery, oaky core. The smoke also has a sweeter side, with pleasant touches of cocoa and caramel on the palate. The finish is slightly dry.
U.S.: \$13.00 U.K.: N/A STRENGTH: Medium-Full

89

	NICARAGUA RING GAUGE: 48 LENGTH: 7" FILLER: NICARAGUA BINDER: INDONESIA WRAPPER: ECUADOR	ARCHETYPE AXIS MUNDI CHURCHILL This is an exceptionally nutty smoke, which has notes of almonds and cashews as it burns. The finish is sweet, with creamy, nougat notes and a faint touch of mint. U.S.: \$14.09 U.K.: N/A STRENGTH: Medium	88
	NICARAGUA RING GAUGE: 50 LENGTH: 7" FILLER: NICARAGUA, BRAZIL BINDER: U.S.A./CONN. HABANO WRAPPER: MEXICO	UNDERCROWN CHURCHILL An inky-black Churchill that smokes evenly, producing a fine ash. Heavy notes of earth and bitter cocoa are met with hints of coffee and licorice. U.S.: \$9.60 U.K.: N/A STRENGTH: Medium-Full	88
	DOMINICAN REPUBLIC RING GAUGE: 50 LENGTH: 7" FILLER: DOM. REP. BINDER: DOM. REP. WRAPPER: ECUADOR	FONSECA VINTAGE CHURCHILL This large, golden-brown Churchill draws well offering a creamy smoke. There are faint notes of nuts, wood and orange on the palate, concluding with a dry finish. U.S.: \$9.30 U.K.: N/A STRENGTH: Mild-Medium	87
	NICARAGUA RING GAUGE: 50 LENGTH: 7" FILLER: NICARAGUA BINDER: ECUADOR WRAPPER: ECUADOR	GILBERTO OLIVA RESERVA 7X50 The nutty, woody smoke of this Churchill has some complexity, also showcasing some sweet and herbal undertones. The finish is slightly muddled. U.S.: \$6.40 U.K.: N/A STRENGTH: Medium	87
	NICARAGUA RING GAUGE: 54 LENGTH: 7" FILLER: DOM. REP., NICARAGUA BINDER: MEXICO WRAPPER: ECUADOR	H. UPMANN BY AJ FERNANDEZ CHURCHILL A tangy, woody smoke with some notes of dried apple and a gummy finish. It's a large Churchill that draws and burns fairly evenly. U.S.: \$8.97 U.K.: N/A STRENGTH: Medium	87
	NICARAGUA RING GAUGE: 48 LENGTH: 7" FILLER: NICARAGUA BINDER: NICARAGUA WRAPPER: NICARAGUA	PLASENCIA RESERVA ORIGINAL CHURCHILL Dark and oily with a rustic, veiny wrapper. There's a bit of sweetness here redolent of pipe tobacco along with some earth and vanilla notes, but the saccharine finish affected the score. U.S.: \$19.00 U.K.: N/A STRENGTH: Medium	86
	DOMINICAN REPUBLIC RING GAUGE: 50 LENGTH: 7" FILLER: DOM. REP., NICARAGUA BINDER: NICARAGUA WRAPPER: ECUADOR	LA GLORIA CUBANA CHURCHILL The tight draw of this Churchill produces a rather thin smoke that starts sour before picking up a faint raisin sweetness. It becomes overwhelmingly earthy and piney. U.S.: \$7.19 U.K.: N/A STRENGTH: Medium	85
	NICARAGUA RING GAUGE: 52 LENGTH: 7" FILLER: NICARAGUA BINDER: CAMEROON WRAPPER: ECUADOR	ENCLAVE CHURCHILL A lumpy, uneven Churchill covered in a rough wrapper and uncut foot. It burns rather hot, so any initial notes of woody and fresh tobacco become charry and dry. U.S.: \$7.40 U.K.: N/A STRENGTH: Medium-Full	84

coronas

Though it seems the corona size is breaking away from the mainstream more and more each year, there are still plenty of great coronas produced and circulated in the market. The Joya Silver Corona is a perfect example. It scored 92 points and is a traditional size made by a traditional factory. Joya de Nicaragua is the oldest manufacturer of handmade cigars in Nicaragua. It tied with La Relatos The First, a slim smoke owned by Warped Cigars and produced in Nicaragua at the Aganorsa Leaf factory (formerly known as TABSA). Cuba consistently proves itself to be quite adept at crafting coronas, as small cigars from this country tend to score well in the pages of this magazine. Both the H. Upmann Corona Major and the Punch Royal Coronation (packed in tubos) scored 91 points.



NICARAGUA

RING GAUGE: 42 LENGTH: 5 1/4"
FILLER: NICARAGUA
BINDER: MEXICO
WRAPPER: ECUADOR

JOYA SILVER CORONA

Crafted with a three-seam cap, this box-pressed cigar burns evenly. Its earthy character is enlivened by hearty impressions of fruit, roasted nuts and coffee bean.
U.S.: \$6.30 U.K.: N/A STRENGTH: Medium-Full

92



NICARAGUA

RING GAUGE: 38 LENGTH: 6"
FILLER: NICARAGUA
BINDER: NICARAGUA
WRAPPER: ECUADOR

LA RELATOS THE FIRST

Beautifully made with a medium claro wrapper and a multi-seamed cap. This thin cigar burns evenly with initial leathery, floral impressions that show notes of cinnamon, nuts and vanilla bean.
U.S.: \$9.30 U.K.: N/A STRENGTH: Medium-Full

92



CUBA

RING GAUGE: 42 LENGTH: 5 1/4"
FILLER: CUBA
BINDER: CUBA
WRAPPER: CUBA
BOX DATE: SEPTEMBER 2016

H. UPMANN CORONA MAJOR (TUBO)

A reddish-brown corona with a flat head and slightly firm draw. The smoke is sweet and nutty, showing notes of honey and cherry cordial, balanced by leather and a spicy hint of dried red pepper.
U.S.: N/A U.K.: £17.30 STRENGTH: Medium-Full

91



CUBA

RING GAUGE: 43 LENGTH: 5 3/4"
FILLER: CUBA
BINDER: CUBA
WRAPPER: CUBA
BOX DATE: SEPTEMBER 2014

PUNCH ROYAL CORONATION (TUBO)

Sweet and floral with plenty of leathery undertones and a long, nut-and-honey finish. The wrapper is a perfect reddish shade of colorado.
U.S.: N/A U.K.: £19.30 STRENGTH: Medium

91



NICARAGUA

RING GAUGE: 44 LENGTH: 6"
FILLER: NICARAGUA
BINDER: HONDURAS
WRAPPER: ECUADOR

HERRERA ESTELI HABANO LONSDALE DELUXE

The draw of this long, thin cigar is superb, the burn clean and even. Notes of cedar and earth are met with a pistachio nuttiness, black pepper and a dark toast finish.
U.S.: \$9.28 U.K.: N/A STRENGTH: Medium-Full

90



DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

RING GAUGE: 42 LENGTH: 5 1/2"
FILLER: DOM. REP.
BINDER: DOM. REP.
WRAPPER: ECUADOR

LA GALERA HABANO BONCHERO

Dark and oily, this corona draws evenly with perfect combustion. It starts out floral and nutty before showing an earthier side with notes of leather and stony flint. A fruity note of dried peach sets up the woody finish.
U.S.: \$5.10 U.K.: N/A STRENGTH: Medium-Full

90



DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

RING GAUGE: 42 LENGTH: 5 1/2"
FILLER: DOM. REP., ECUADOR
BINDER: DOM. REP.
WRAPPER: ECUADOR

PAUL GARMIRIAN GOURMET RESERVA EXCLUSIVE CORONA

Perfect combustion and an even draw combine for a bright, vibrant smoke full of earthy mineral notes, a burst of orange citrus and a finish of honey and cedar.
U.S.: \$10.45 U.K.: N/A STRENGTH: Medium

90



DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

RING GAUGE: 45 LENGTH: 5 1/4"
FILLER: DOM. REP.
BINDER: DOM. REP.
WRAPPER: CAMEROON

ARTURO FUENTE CUBAN CORONA

Though slightly greenish in appearance, this is a creamy cigar with notes of caramel, coffee and a rustic, earthy finish. It draws and burns evenly.
U.S.: \$5.36 U.K.: N/A STRENGTH: Medium-Full

89



DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

RING GAUGE: 43 LENGTH: 5 5/8"
FILLER: DOM. REP.
BINDER: DOM. REP.
WRAPPER: ECUADOR

DAVIDOFF GRAND CRU NO. 2

A well-made corona with a lush, open draw that delivers a woody, tangy smoke redolent of dried orange peel. Hints of nutmeg and baking spices also come through.
U.S.: \$17.50 U.K.: £25.00 STRENGTH: Mild-Medium

89



DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

RING GAUGE: 44 LENGTH: 5 1/2"
FILLER: DOM. REP.
BINDER: DOM. REP.
WRAPPER: U.S.A./CONN. BROADLEAF

ASHTON AGED MADURO NO. 20

A black, oily cigar that draws and burns evenly, producing a flaky ash. It's a mostly oaky, earthy smoke that hints at minerals and sweet vanilla.
U.S.: \$9.90 U.K.: N/A STRENGTH: Medium

88



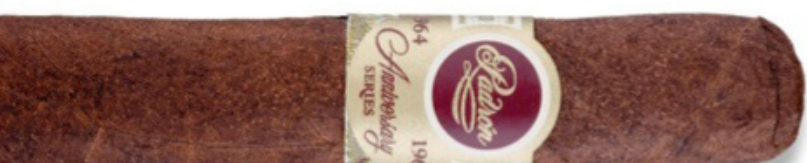
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

RING GAUGE: 43 LENGTH: 5 1/2"
FILLER: DOM. REP., NICARAGUA
BINDER: DOM. REP.
WRAPPER: ECUADOR

LA AURORA 107 CORONA

Made with a dark wrapper, this corona delivers an earthy smoke with notes of roasted coffee bean and an herbal finish.
U.S.: \$6.95 U.K.: N/A STRENGTH: Medium-Full

88



NICARAGUA

RING GAUGE: 42 LENGTH: 6"
FILLER: NICARAGUA
BINDER: NICARAGUA
WRAPPER: NICARAGUA

PADRÓN 1964 ANNIVERSARY SERIES CORONA NATURAL

Slim and box-pressed with a flat head. It's an inconsistent smoke that starts dry and leafy before revealing hints of oak and cashew and an earthy finish.
U.S.: \$10.80 U.K.: N/A STRENGTH: Medium-Full

87

corona gordas

Three cigars in this tasting of toros really got our attention, scoring a very impressive 93 points. All of them showed not only balance and vibrancy, but unique style. Take, for example, the complex spiciness of the Aladino Toro. Made in Honduras by Julio Eiroa, it displayed an entire spice cabinet worth of flavors in a single puff. And where the Honduran Gran Habano La Conquista scored 93 points for its polished elegance and consistent balance, the Punch Diablo's smoke was so devilishly rich, each puff was like sinking your teeth into a nutty block of fudge. The brand is made in Nicaragua by A.J. Fernandez for General Cigar and is billed as General's most full-bodied Punch to date.



HONDURAS
RING GAUGE: 50 LENGTH: 6"
FILLER: HONDURAS
BINDER: HONDURAS
WRAPPER: HONDURAS

ALADINO TORO
The warm, complex stew of mideastern spices coming from this cigar contradicts its dullish, matte wrapper. Each puff is loaded with notes of bay leaf, clove, cinnamon and cardamom atop a peppery, earthy core.
U.S.: \$11.00 U.K.: N/A STRENGTH: Medium-Full

93



HONDURAS
RING GAUGE: 54 LENGTH: 6"
FILLER: NICARAGUA, COSTA RICA, COLOMBIA
BINDER: NICARAGUA
WRAPPER: NICARAGUA

GRAN HABANO LA CONQUISTA GRAN ROBUSTO
There's a coppery gleam to this oily cigar, whose cedary, nutty core is beautifully accented by spicy notes of caraway seed, cinnamon and graham cracker.
U.S.: \$8.00 U.K.: N/A STRENGTH: Medium

93



NICARAGUA
RING GAUGE: 50 LENGTH: 6 1/4"
FILLER: NICARAGUA, HONDURAS
BINDER: U.S.A./CONN. BROADLEAF
WRAPPER: ECUADOR

PUNCH DIABLO SCAMP
Every puff of this dark cigar gives the sensation of biting into a piece of chocolate fudge, studded with nuts, espresso beans and toasted coconut. Hints of caramel and earth make this smoke a sublimely rich experience.
U.S.: \$7.19 U.K.: N/A STRENGTH: Full

93



DOMINICAN REPUBLIC
RING GAUGE: 54 LENGTH: 6"
FILLER: DOM. REP.
BINDER: DOM. REP.
WRAPPER: ECUADOR

EASTERN STANDARD THE CYPRUS ROOM
Complex layers of chocolate, rye bread and nuts play off the earthy, barnyard core of this pigtailed toro, which draws and burns evenly.
U.S.: \$12.00 U.K.: N/A STRENGTH: Medium-Full

92



CUBA
RING GAUGE: 48 LENGTH: 5 1/2"
FILLER: CUBA
BINDER: CUBA
WRAPPER: CUBA
BOX DATE: DECEMBER 2016

PUNCH PUNCH 48
The floral, chocolatey smoke of this well-made cigar shows nuanced impressions of graham cracker, cinnamon and a hint of leather. Rich and complex.
U.S.: N/A U.K.: £20.25 STRENGTH: Medium

92



CUBA
RING GAUGE: 54 LENGTH: 5 1/2"
FILLER: CUBA
BINDER: CUBA
WRAPPER: CUBA
BOX DATE: DECEMBER 2017

SAINT LUIS REY HERFING EXCLUSIVO MEDIO ORIENTE
A hearty cigar that shows bold notes of leather and wood with spicier touches of cardamom and cumin. Sweet hints of vanilla and butterscotch also emerge.
U.S.: N/A LEBANON: \$17.00 STRENGTH: Medium-Full

92

	NICARAGUA RING GAUGE: 52 LENGTH: 6 1/2" FILLER: HONDURAS, NICARAGUA BINDER: NICARAGUA WRAPPER: COSTA RICA	ROCKY PATEL OLDE WORLD RESERVE MADURO TORO Light touches of earth and black pepper usher in a richer, sweeter smoke profoundly redolent of cocoa powder. The salted-caramel finish adds elegance to the cocoa powder core. U.S.: \$10.00 U.K.: N/A STRENGTH: Medium	91
	BAHAMAS RING GAUGE: 54 LENGTH: 5 3/4" FILLER: NICARAGUA, GREECE, HONDURAS, COSTA RICA BINDER: ECUADOR WRAPPER: ECUADOR	GRAYCLIFF CRYSTAL TORO Reddish brown with healthy coloring, this toro ties together notes of molasses, vanilla and spicy earth with a creamy smoke that remains silky and substantial. U.S.: \$24.00 U.K.: N/A STRENGTH: Medium	90
	NICARAGUA RING GAUGE: 46 LENGTH: 6" FILLER: DOM. REP., NICARAGUA, BRAZIL BINDER: NICARAGUA WRAPPER: NICARAGUA	NESTOR MIRANDA COLLECTION HABANO CORONA GORDA Though a bit lumpy to the touch, this cigar offers a rich, nutty smoke with roasted coffee bean notes and slight accents of earth and minerals. U.S.: \$8.65 U.K.: N/A STRENGTH: Medium	90
	DOMINICAN REPUBLIC RING GAUGE: 52 LENGTH: 6" FILLER: DOM. REP., NICARAGUA BINDER: U.S.A./CONN. BROADLEAF WRAPPER: U.S.A./CONN. HABANO	COHIBA MACASSAR TORO GRANDE The open draw of this oily toro delivers an herbal, woody smoke that leaves touches of black pepper, fruit and cocoa on the palate. U.S.: \$24.99 U.K.: N/A STRENGTH: Medium	89
	CUBA RING GAUGE: 54 LENGTH: 5 7/8" FILLER: CUBA BINDER: CUBA WRAPPER: CUBA BOX DATE: OCTOBER 2018	DIPLOMATICOS AMMUNITION EXCLUSIVO PHOENICIA The draw on this fat toro is notably firm, but the burn is even throughout. It's a toasty, oaky smoke with a salt-and-pepper quality, though the finish is muted. U.S.: N/A LEBANON: \$22.00 STRENGTH: Medium	89
	NICARAGUA RING GAUGE: 49 LENGTH: 6" FILLER: NICARAGUA BINDER: NICARAGUA WRAPPER: ECUADOR	MY FATHER NO. 3 CREMA Some unusually sharp veins protrude from the wrapper of this oily cigar, which is full of wood, leather and black pepper though a charry finish affected the score. U.S.: \$11.50 U.K.: N/A STRENGTH: Full	87
	HONDURAS RING GAUGE: 52 LENGTH: 6" FILLER: HONDURAS, NICARAGUA BINDER: HONDURAS WRAPPER: ECUADOR	THE OSCAR HABANO TORO The bold and prevalent earthy notes of this dark smoke are as big as the beefy toro itself, though its considerable earthiness loses intensity, becoming powdery and herbal. U.S.: \$11.50 U.K.: N/A STRENGTH: Medium	87
	DOMINICAN REPUBLIC RING GAUGE: 54 LENGTH: 6" FILLER: DOM. REP., NICARAGUA BINDER: NICARAGUA WRAPPER: U.S.A./CONN. BROADLEAF	FLORES Y RODRIGUEZ CONNECTICUT VALLEY RESERVE GRAN TORO A blackish toro with a veiny wrapper. Notes of licorice and anise turn oaky before the flinty finish, but the persistent charry aftertaste of burnt wood hurt the score. U.S.: \$18.00 U.K.: N/A STRENGTH: Full	84

figurados

Three smokes in this category of shaped cigars scored 90 points or higher, with two of them coming from the same factory. The Arturo Fuente Don Carlos No. 2 scored 91 points. The thick torpedo is made in the Dominican Republic and is notable for its Cameroon wrapper. Though Cameroon wrapper can sometimes appear coarse and grayish, don't let the rough appearance fool you. When blended properly, this exotic cover leaf can be quite delicious and Fuente brings Cameroon to its potential with an all-Dominican core. When the Cuban Montecristo Petit No. 2 came out in 2013, it was intended to be a shorter version of the classic No. 2, a much longer pirámide. Now that a number of years have passed, it might be time to take this cigar at face value, rather than comparing it to its older sibling. The Montecristo Petit No. 2 scored 91 points, which means that this Cuban belicoso can surely stand on its own. The Diamond Crown Julius Caesar Pyramid scored 90 points, and is also made at the Fuente factory in the Dominican Republic. The line is owned by the J.C. Newman Cigar Co. and named after its founder.



DOMINICAN REPUBLIC
RING GAUGE: 55 LENGTH: 6"
FILLER: DOM. REP.
BINDER: DOM. REP.
WRAPPER: CAMEROON

ARTURO FUENTE DON CARLOS NO. 2
Though the wrapper is a bit splotchy and coarse, this is a delicious cigar that leaves the oaky qualities of a rum barrel, along with hints of nutmeg, cinnamon and cocoa.
U.S.: \$12.85 U.K.: N/A STRENGTH: Medium

91



CUBA
RING GAUGE: 52 LENGTH: 4 3/4"
FILLER: CUBA
BINDER: CUBA
WRAPPER: CUBA
BOX DATE: SEPTEMBER 2015

MONTECRISTO PETIT NO. 2
A mini torpedo that smokes fairly well. Light notes of wood and sweet tea become stronger with toast, graham cracker and a clear, honey-like finish.
U.S.: N/A U.K.: £22.60 STRENGTH: Medium

91



DOMINICAN REPUBLIC
RING GAUGE: 52 LENGTH: 6 1/2"
FILLER: DOM. REP.
BINDER: DOM. REP.
WRAPPER: ECUADOR

DIAMOND CROWN JULIUS CAESER PYRAMID
Covered in a gleaming, oily wrapper, this torpedo shows sweet notes of cocoa and caramel buttressed by a core of coffee bean and wood.
U.S.: \$18.45 U.K.: N/A STRENGTH: Medium-Full

90



HONDURAS
RING GAUGE: 54 LENGTH: 6 3/4"
FILLER: HONDURAS, NICARAGUA
BINDER: HONDURAS, INDONESIA
WRAPPER: HONDURAS

ALEC BRADLEY TEMPUS NATURAL MAGISTRI
An alluring shade of chocolate brown, this double-tapered figurado draws and burns evenly despite its curves and tapers. Peppery at first, the cigar becomes quite woody with hints of coffee.
U.S.: \$10.70 U.K.: N/A STRENGTH: Medium-Full

89



NICARAGUA
RING GAUGE: 52 LENGTH: 6 1/8"
FILLER: NICARAGUA
BINDER: NICARAGUA
WRAPPER: ECUADOR

L'ATELIER SELECTION SPÉCIALE LAT TORPEDO
Spicy black pepper notes set the tone for this solidly rolled torpedo. It takes on hints of coffee and licorice before a notably herbal finish.
U.S.: \$9.50 U.K.: N/A STRENGTH: Medium-Full

89

	DOMINICAN REPUBLIC RING GAUGE: 50 LENGTH: 6" FILLER: DOM. REP. BINDER: DOM. REP. WRAPPER: ECUADOR	VEGA MAGNA BELICOSO This long, rustic looking figurado burns unevenly, but delivers fruity and earthy impressions tied together with hints of cocoa powder and cedar. U.S.: \$21.60 U.K.: N/A STRENGTH: Medium	88
	CUBA RING GAUGE: 52 LENGTH: 6 1/8" FILLER: CUBA BINDER: CUBA WRAPPER: CUBA BOX DATE: JUNE 2015	DIPLOMATICOS NO. 2 A lightly hued torpedo with a blistery burn. Though it starts out thin and grassy, flavors become more substantial warming to show nutty notes of almond. U.S.: N/A U.K.: £23.40 STRENGTH: Mild-Medium	87
	HONDURAS RING GAUGE: 52 LENGTH: 6 1/4" FILLER: NICARAGUA BINDER: HONDURAS WRAPPER: HONDURAS	PADILLA MIAMI 8&11 TORPEDO First puffs of this long torpedo leave a charred sensation on the palate with notes of burnt wood, but the charriness dissipates to show spice and leather. U.S.: \$14.00 U.K.: N/A STRENGTH: Medium-Full	87
	HONDURAS RING GAUGE: 54 LENGTH: 6 1/8" FILLER: HONDURAS BINDER: HONDURAS WRAPPER: HONDURAS	CAMACHO COROJO FIGURADO There are many soft spots up and down this belicoso, which burns unevenly. Initial notes of wood, spice and chocolate are offset by a chalky, eucalyptus finish. U.S.: \$9.25 U.K.: N/A STRENGTH: Medium-Full	86
	CUBA RING GAUGE: 47 LENGTH: 6 1/4" FILLER: CUBA BINDER: CUBA WRAPPER: CUBA BOX DATE: NOVEMBER 2016	HOYO DE MONTERREY ELEGANTES A long, thin double figurado with pointy tapers and a veiny wrapper. It's a one-dimensional smoke showing woody, floral notes, a touch of nuttiness and a papery finish. U.S.: N/A U.K.: £20.70 STRENGTH: Medium	86
	DOMINICAN REPUBLIC RING GAUGE: 54 LENGTH: 5" FILLER: DOM. REP., BRAZIL, NICARAGUA, PERU BINDER: DOM. REP. WRAPPER: CAMEROON	LA AURORA PREFERIDOS 1903 EDITION PLATINUM NO. 2 (TUBO) With its tapered ends and bulbous midsection, this cigar represents the classic perfecto. It's earthy and leathery with some black pepper, but lacking sweetness. The uneven burn corrects itself. U.S.: \$20.00 U.K.: N/A STRENGTH: Medium-Full	86
	NICARAGUA RING GAUGE: 55 LENGTH: 6 1/2" FILLER: HONDURAS, NICARAGUA BINDER: NICARAGUA WRAPPER: ECUADOR	LIBERATION BY HAMLET TORO A fat cigar with a belicoso head and shaggy foot. Initial elements of earth and wood are overpowered by a charry, slightly metallic aftertaste. U.S.: \$11.10 U.K.: N/A STRENGTH: Medium-Full	86
	NICARAGUA RING GAUGE: 52 LENGTH: 6 1/8" FILLER: NICARAGUA BINDER: NICARAGUA WRAPPER: ECUADOR	SAN CRISTOBAL ELEGANCIA PYRAMID This is an herbal, woody torpedo with notes of bread and cereal that leave the palate a bit dry with a chalky finish. U.S.: \$7.75 U.K.: N/A STRENGTH: Medium	85

lonsdales

Sometimes the smoke of a cigar has the uncanny ability to mimic other pleasant gustatory experiences so well, the cigar is actually transporting. This was the case for the Room101 Farce It Is a Lonsdale, which scored 94 points. Every puff of this slender cigar recalls one comforting food memory or aroma after the next in a warm and resonant way. If the quirky name has you scratching your head, it's because it came from the creative mind of Matt Booth who owns the brand and brings a bit of madcap humor into the cigar industry. Made with a five-country blend, the cigar is rolled in the Dominican Republic at the William Ventura factory. Two cigars scored 92 points, one from Nicaragua and the other from the United States. Black Label Trading Co. is a small company headed by husband-and-wife team James and Angela Brown. They have their Last Rites brand made in Nicaragua at a little-known factory called Oveja Negra. The Cornelius & Anthony Cornelius brand is produced in Miami's Little Havana neighborhood at the El Titan de Bronze factory. It's the most expensive cigar in the category due to the high cost of U.S. labor.



DOMINICAN REPUBLIC
RING GAUGE: 42 LENGTH: 6 1/2"
FILLER: U.S.A./PENN. BROADLEAF,
DOM. REP., NICARAGUA, ECUADOR
BINDER: INDONESIA
WRAPPER: ECUADOR

ROOM101 FARCE IT IS A LONSDALE
Smoking this cigar is like chewing on a ginger molasses cookie, as dense notes of sweet spice slather the palate with each puff. There's plenty of oaky vanilla and leather to this cigar, which has a finish of maple-cured bacon.
U.S.: \$10.50 U.K.: N/A STRENGTH: Medium-Full

94



NICARAGUA
RING GAUGE: 42 LENGTH: 6 1/2"
FILLER: NICARAGUA, HONDURAS
BINDER: HONDURAS
WRAPPER: ECUADOR

BLACK LABEL TRADING CO. LAST RITES PETITE LANCERO
The smoke from this dark, skinny cigar layers the palate with rich notes of chocolate and earth before the nutty finish. Some pleasing licorice impressions also emerge.
U.S.: \$10.00 U.K.: N/A STRENGTH: Full

92



U.S.A.
RING GAUGE: 42 LENGTH: 6 1/2"
FILLER: NICARAGUA, DOM. REP.
BINDER: ECUADOR
WRAPPER: ECUADOR

CORNELIUS & ANTHONY CORNELIUS LONSDALE
The dense, chewy smoke of this lonsdale hits the palate squarely with an earthy, nuttiness before blossoming to show a spicy array of saffron, cardamom, cocoa and ground cloves.
U.S.: \$13.50 U.K.: N/A STRENGTH: Medium-Full

92



NICARAGUA
RING GAUGE: 42 LENGTH: 6 7/8"
FILLER: NICARAGUA
BINDER: NICARAGUA
WRAPPER: NICARAGUA

PADRÓN AMBASSADOR MADURO
Thin and dark, this rustic-looking cigar is slightly box pressed with tasty, straightforward notes of leather, wood, chocolate and caramel.
U.S.: \$5.90 U.K.: N/A STRENGTH: Medium-Full

90



HONDURAS
RING GAUGE: 41 LENGTH: 6 1/2"
FILLER: HONDURAS, NICARAGUA
BINDER: HONDURAS, NICARAGUA
WRAPPER: HONDURAS

ALEC BRADLEY COYOL PETIT LANCERO
Topped with a pigtail cap, this long, thin cigar has a lush, open draw. It starts salty and earthy, taking on some chocolate sweetness and a note of black pepper.
U.S.: \$7.25 U.K.: N/A STRENGTH: Medium-Full

89

	NICARAGUA RING GAUGE: 44 LENGTH: 6 1/4" FILLER: NICARAGUA BINDER: NICARAGUA WRAPPER: NICARAGUA	ILLUSIONE F9 Topped with a four-seam cap, this dark and streaky lonsdale draws and burns evenly. It starts out with light notes of black tea and cedar but picks up to show a warm nuttiness and spicy ginger finish. U.S.: \$9.95 U.K.: N/A STRENGTH: Medium	89
	DOMINICAN REPUBLIC RING GAUGE: 44 LENGTH: 6 5/8" FILLER: DOM. REP. BINDER: DOM. REP. WRAPPER: U.S.A./CONN. SHADE	MONTECRISTO CLASSIC ESPECIAL NO. 1 The draw of this golden-brown lonsdale is full, if not a bit firm, but offers a woody smoke tangy with minerals and citrus. Some bready, toasty notes of biscuit also come through before a graham cracker finish. U.S.: \$11.25 U.K.: N/A STRENGTH: Medium	89
	DOMINICAN REPUBLIC RING GAUGE: 44 LENGTH: 6 5/8" FILLER: DOM. REP., NICARAGUA BINDER: NICARAGUA WRAPPER: ECUADOR	MONTECRISTO WHITE ESPECIAL NO. 1 There's a tangy, citrus acidity to this lonsdale, balanced by floral hints of lavender and a cedar-like finish. U.S.: \$10.79 U.K.: N/A STRENGTH: Mild-Medium	88
	DOMINICAN REPUBLIC RING GAUGE: 42 LENGTH: 6 1/2" FILLER: DOM. REP., MEXICO BINDER: MEXICO WRAPPER: U.S.A./CONN. SHADE	MACANUDO CAFÉ BARON DE ROTHSCHILD Tan and streaky, this slender smoke is dry and grassy with floral notes and a short, almond finish. It draws and burns evenly. U.S.: \$8.29 U.K.: N/A STRENGTH: Mild	87
	NICARAGUA RING GAUGE: 44 LENGTH: 6 1/2" FILLER: NICARAGUA BINDER: NICARAGUA WRAPPER: ECUADOR	OLIVA CONNECTICUT RESERVE LONSDALE Tasters encountered inconsistencies on the draw and burn of this yellowish lonsdale. Initial puffs are woody and herbal with hints of maple and brown sugar overwhelmed by a very grassy finish. U.S.: \$6.86 U.K.: N/A STRENGTH: Mild-Medium	87
	DOMINICAN REPUBLIC RING GAUGE: 43 LENGTH: 7" FILLER: DOM. REP. BINDER: DOM. REP. WRAPPER: ECUADOR	THE GRIFFIN'S NO. 200 Pale and veiny, this thin cigar draws evenly showing a woody smoke with hints of lemon peel, but the finish is dry and chalky. U.S.: \$11.30 U.K.: N/A STRENGTH: Mild	87
	DOMINICAN REPUBLIC RING GAUGE: 42 LENGTH: 6 1/2" FILLER: DOM. REP. BINDER: DOM. REP. WRAPPER: U.S.A./CONN. BROADLEAF	ARTURO FUENTE SPANISH LONSDALE MADURO The draw of this rustic-looking cigar is notably firm, but manages to impart a woody smoke with hints of leather and nougat. The finish tastes earthy and charred. U.S.: \$5.36 U.K.: N/A STRENGTH: Medium-Full	86
	DOMINICAN REPUBLIC RING GAUGE: 43 LENGTH: 6 3/4" FILLER: NICARAGUA, DOM. REP. BINDER: INDONESIA WRAPPER: ECUADOR	VILLIGER LA FLOR DE YNCLAN LANCERO ESPECIAL Notes of walnut, earth and orange peel struggle to emerge from this long, thin cigar's overwhelming mustiness. The cigar is topped with a pigtail cap. U.S.: \$11.00 U.K.: N/A STRENGTH: Medium	85

robustos

Out of the 14 cigars in this robusto category, more than half of them scored 90 points or higher. That’s a tremendous showing for one of the country’s most popular sizes. The standouts in this stellar lineup of robustos scored 92 points—one a classic Cuban and the other a new Nicaraguan. The Aging Room Quattro Nicaragua Espresso is made by A.J. Fernandez (though his name does not appear in any of the branding), and contains only Nicaraguan tobacco. Quattro refers to the four-sided, box-pressed shape of the cigar. The Partagás Serie D No. 4 is one of Cuba’s quintessential robustos, popular with fans of stronger Cuban cigars. It’s also Cuba’s best-selling smoke.



NICARAGUA
RING GAUGE: 50 LENGTH: 5"
FILLER: NICARAGUA
BINDER: NICARAGUA
WRAPPER: NICARAGUA

AGING ROOM QUATTRO NICARAGUA ESPRESSIVO
Darkly-hued and box-pressed, this well-made robusto burns evenly. Notes of chocolate and coffee bean are balanced by subtle intonations of coconut and herbs.
U.S.: \$10.65 U.K.: N/A STRENGTH: Medium-Full

92



CUBA
RING GAUGE: 50 LENGTH: 4 7/8"
FILLER: CUBA
BINDER: CUBA
WRAPPER: CUBA
BOX DATE: JUNE 2017

PARTAGÁS SERIE D NO. 4
Opulent and rich from the first puff, this reddish-brown robusto leans earthy and strong with a bold, coffee-like character, but is balanced by notes of salted peanuts, honey and wood.
U.S.: N/A U.K.: £21.80 STRENGTH: Medium-Full

92



NICARAGUA
RING GAUGE: 52 LENGTH: 5 1/4"
FILLER: NICARAGUA
BINDER: NICARAGUA
WRAPPER: U.S.A./CONN. BROADLEAF

601 BLUE LABEL MADURO ROBUSTO
Each puff of this dark robusto is a tasty balance of coffee, earth, raisins and licorice, which harmonize to a long, rich finish. The draw and burn are perfect throughout.
U.S.: \$8.00 U.K.: N/A STRENGTH: Medium-Full

91



CUBA
RING GAUGE: 50 LENGTH: 4 7/8"
FILLER: CUBA
BINDER: CUBA
WRAPPER: CUBA
BOX DATE: SEPTEMBER 2014

MONTECRISTO OPEN MASTER
Covered in a medium-claro wrapper, this robusto shows the spicy tanginess of lemon peel, pickled ginger and lavender. The finish is floral with a bit of sweet graham cracker.
U.S.: N/A U.K.: £23.10 STRENGTH: Medium

91



NICARAGUA
RING GAUGE: 50 LENGTH: 5"
FILLER: COSTA RICA, NICARAGUA
BINDER: NICARAGUA
WRAPPER: ECUADOR

TIMELESS PANAMERICANA EPICURE
The spicy, earthy smoke of this dark robusto takes on notes of chocolate, black pepper and spicy cinnamon before a sweet, honey-like finish.
U.S.: \$11.50 U.K.: N/A STRENGTH: Medium-Full

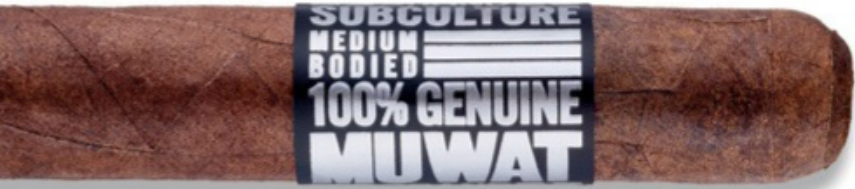
91



NICARAGUA
RING GAUGE: 52 LENGTH: 5"
FILLER: NICARAGUA
BINDER: NICARAGUA
WRAPPER: NICARAGUA

VIAJE EXCLUSIVO NICARAGUA LEADED ROBUSTO
Topped with a three-seam cap, this well-made cigar burns evenly. Notes of cocoa powder, nuts and wood have the savory underpinnings of leather, leading to a rum-barrel finish.
U.S.: \$9.20 U.K.: N/A STRENGTH: Full

91

	HONDURAS RING GAUGE: 50 LENGTH: 5" FILLER: HONDURAS BINDER: HONDURAS WRAPPER: HONDURAS	EIROA 50X5 The matte wrapper of this slightly box-pressed cigar lacks oils, but the cigar delivers a nutty, earthy smoke full of almond and mineral notes that segue into a finish of black pepper and bitter espresso. U.S.: \$11.72 U.K.: N/A STRENGTH: Medium-Full	90
	NICARAGUA RING GAUGE: 50 LENGTH: 5" FILLER: NICARAGUA BINDER: NICARAGUA WRAPPER: MEXICO	HVC CERRO MADURO ROBUSTO Near black in appearance, this dark robusto has a significantly earthy core framed by complex notes of chicory coffee, cloves and licorice. U.S.: \$8.50 U.K.: N/A STRENGTH: Medium-Full	90
	NICARAGUA RING GAUGE: 50 LENGTH: 5" FILLER: NICARAGUA BINDER: NICARAGUA WRAPPER: NICARAGUA	ROMEO Y JULIETA 1875 NICARAGUA BULLY This oily robusto burns evenly, showing a mostly woody character with touches of graham cracker, milk chocolate and caramel. The finish hints of spice. U.S.: \$6.80 U.K.: N/A STRENGTH: Medium	90
	DOMINICAN REPUBLIC RING GAUGE: 52 LENGTH: 5" FILLER: NICARAGUA BINDER: NICARAGUA WRAPPER: ECUADOR	E.P. CARRILLO CAPA DE SOL ROBUSTO ROYAL Glue spots stain the wrapper of this robusto, but it draws and burns evenly. Sweet notes of butterscotch and chocolate frame an oaky core. The finish is spicy. U.S.: \$8.30 U.K.: N/A STRENGTH: Medium	89
	NICARAGUA RING GAUGE: 50 LENGTH: 5 1/4" FILLER: NICARAGUA BINDER: NICARAGUA WRAPPER: NICARAGUA	GUARDIAN OF THE FARM JJ Woody, peppery notes stand out the most here, with some cedary undertones and a nutty finish. The robusto is fashioned with a three-seam cap and closed, uncut foot. U.S.: \$8.70 U.K.: N/A STRENGTH: Medium-Full	89
	NICARAGUA RING GAUGE: 52 LENGTH: 5" FILLER: NICARAGUA BINDER: NICARAGUA WRAPPER: ECUADOR	LA PALINA NICARAGUA OSCURO ROBUSTO The smoke of this dark robusto has the woody qualities of an oak wine barrel along with some toasty, leathery notes and vanilla finish. U.S.: \$7.99 U.K.: N/A STRENGTH: Medium-Full	89
	NICARAGUA RING GAUGE: 50 LENGTH: 4 1/2" FILLER: NICARAGUA, BRAZIL BINDER: ECUADOR WRAPPER: MEXICO	MY UZI WEIGHS A TON NIGHTCRAWLER While this dark robusto is full of wood, spice and coffee bean, the dry finish offset the score. U.S.: \$5.60 U.K.: N/A STRENGTH: Medium-Full	87
	NICARAGUA RING GAUGE: 48 LENGTH: 4 1/2" FILLER: NICARAGUA BINDER: NICARAGUA WRAPPER: MEXICO	MY FATHER LA OPULENCIA PETITE The heavy earth and mineral notes of this cigar start out harsh and bitter but improve a bit with notes of coffee and black pepper. U.S.: \$7.10 U.K.: N/A STRENGTH: Full	84

buying guide

TOP SCORES, VALUES AND STRENGTH | BLIND TASTE TEST NO. 150

TOP SCORES

- **94** **Room101 Farce It Is A Lonsdale**
Dominican Republic • \$10.50 • Lonsdale • Medium-Full
- **93** **Aladino Toro**
Honduras • \$11.00 • Corona Gorda • Medium-Full
- **93** **Gran Habano La Conquista Gran Robusto**
Honduras • \$8.00 • Corona Gorda • Medium
- **93** **Punch Diablo Scamp**
Nicaragua • \$7.19 • Corona Gorda • Full
- **92** **Aging Room Quattro Nicaragua Espresso**
Nicaragua • \$10.65 • Robusto • Medium-Full
- **92** **Cornelius & Anthony Cornelius Lonsdale**
U.S.A. • \$13.50 • Lonsdale • Medium-Full
- **92** **Eastern Standard The Cyprus Room**
Dominican Republic • \$12.00 • Corona Gorda • Medium-Full
- **92** **La Relatos The First**
Nicaragua • \$9.30 • Corona • Medium-Full
- **92** **Partagás Serie D No. 4**
Cuba • £21.80 • Robusto • Medium-Full
- **92** **Punch Punch 48**
Cuba • £20.25 • Corona Gorda • Medium

TOP VALUES

- **92** **Joya Silver Corona**
Nicaragua • \$6.30 • Corona • Medium-Full
- **90** **La Galera Habano Bonchero**
Dominican Republic • \$5.10 • Corona • Medium-Full
- **90** **New World Cameroon Selection Churchill**
Nicaragua • \$6.50 • Churchill • Medium
- **90** **Padrón Ambassador Maduro**
Nicaragua • \$5.90 • Lonsdale • Medium-Full
- **89** **Arturo Fuente Cuban Corona**
Dominican Republic • \$5.36 • Corona • Medium-Full

MILDER CIGARS

- 90** **Kristoff Connecticut Churchill**
Dominican Republic • \$8.95 • Churchill • Mild-Medium
- 89** **Davidoff Grand Cru No. 2**
Dominican Republic • \$17.50 • Corona • Mild-Medium
- 88** **Montecristo White Especial No. 1**
Dominican Republic • \$10.79 • Lonsdale • Mild-Medium
- 87** **Macanudo Café Baron de Rothschild**
Dominican Republic • \$8.29 • Lonsdale • Mild
- 87** **The Griffin's No. 200**
Dominican Republic • \$11.30 • Lonsdale • Mild

MEDIUM-BODIED CIGARS

- 92** **Saint Luis Rey Herfing Exclusivo Medio Oriente**
Cuba • LEBANON: \$17.00 • Corona Gorda • Medium-Full
- 91** **601 Blue Label Maduro Robusto**
Nicaragua • \$8.00 • Robusto • Medium-Full
- 91** **Arturo Fuente Don Carlos No. 2**
Dominican Republic • \$12.85 • Figurado • Medium
- 91** **H. Upmann Corona Major (Tubo)**
Cuba • £17.30 • Corona • Medium-Full
- 91** **La Flor Dominicana 1994 Mambo**
Dominican Republic • \$8.80 • Churchill • Medium

STRONGER SMOKES

- 92** **Black Label Trading Co. Last Rites Petite Lancero**
Nicaragua • \$10.00 • Lonsdale • Full
- 91** **Timeless Panamericana Epicure**
Nicaragua • \$11.50 • Robusto • Medium-Full
- 91** **Viaje Exclusivo Nicaragua Leaded Robusto**
Nicaragua • \$9.20 • Robusto • Full
- 90** **Diamond Crown Julius Caesar Pyramid**
Dominican Republic • \$18.45 • Figurado • Medium-Full
- 90** **Herrera Esteli Habano Lonsdale Deluxe**
Nicaragua • \$9.28 • Corona • Medium-Full

CIGAR AFICIONADO'S
100-POINT SCALE

Classic 95–100 • Outstanding 90–94 • Very good to excellent 80–89 • Average to good commercial quality 70–79
Don't waste your money 0-69 • Not available N/A • Note: all prices are manufacturers' suggested retail, before taxes.

Great Places And Ways To Light Up



CORONA CIGAR | ORLANDO, FL

Millions of cigars, hundreds of whiskeys and one-of-a-kind experiences! Enjoy three Orlando locations offering exclusive cigars, authentic Florida Sun Grown tobacco and private barrel whiskeys.

coronacigar.com



DAVIDOFF OF GENEVA | MULTIPLE LOCATIONS

Discover rare and exclusive cigars in our bespoke vault. Personalize cigar boxes and accessories, or relax in our luxurious lounge. Davidoff of Geneva since 1911 is your passport to a cigar world above the ordinary. This is quality time, elevated.

Atlanta • Houston • New York • Las Vegas • Tampa

davidoffgeneva.com



NEPTUNE CIGARS | SOUTH FLORIDA

Thousands of cigars and accessories plus a friendly, knowledgeable staff, in multiple locations in beautiful S. Florida: Miami, South Beach and Fort Lauderdale, near S. Florida's best attractions. Come see why we're the premier cigar superstore for aficionados the world over.

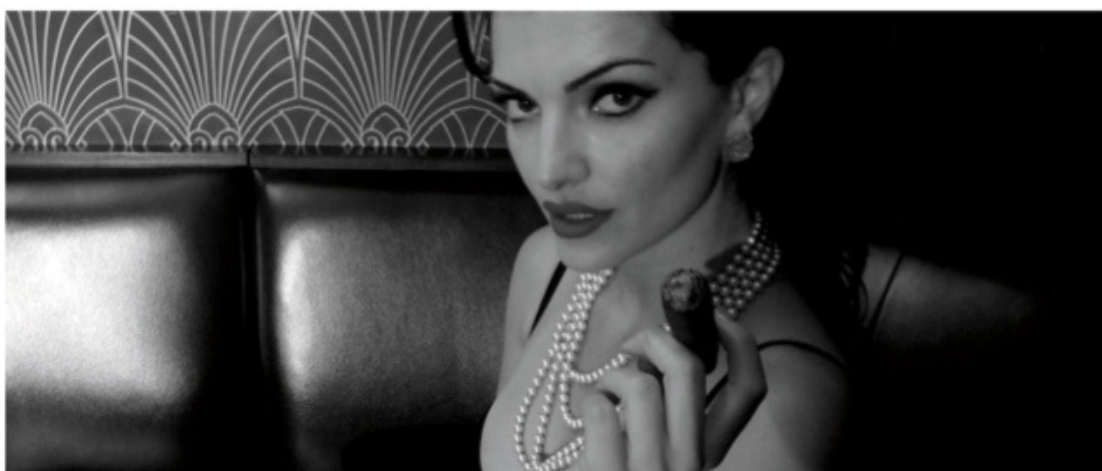
neptunecigar.com



SHELLY'S BACK ROOM | WASHINGTON, D.C.

A distinguished assortment of fine cigars and whiskeys, a state-of-the-art continuous fresh-air system, eight HD TVs, complimentary Wi-Fi, a seasonal outdoor café, and lunch, dinner and late-night menus make Shelly's a D.C. legend! Located two blocks from the White House.

shellysbackroom.com



SOHO CIGAR BAR | MANHATTAN, NY

Eat. Drink. Smoke . . . Indoors! Relax and enjoy flights and pairings from our curated selection of 150 world-class whiskeys and premium cigars. Then indulge yourself with any of our artisanal, crafted appetizers. Your table awaits.

sohocigarbar.com



PETER JAMES LEATHER CO.

The original, handmade cigar case for Aficionados by Aficionados. We didn't compromise quality, why should you?

peterjames.ca

Visit greatplacestolightup.cigaraficionado.com for more information and exclusive offers
To Advertise Contact: **Barry Abrams • 212-684-4896** babrams@mshanken.com



95 ROMEO Y JULIETA FABULOSO (1985)

It's surprising how little this "A"-sized cigar tastes like cedar, seeing how it spent so many years in a cedar box. Instead, this is a nutty, fruity smoke, with light hints of peach tea that transition to more festive, concentrated notes of dried apricot and fig paste. There's some lavender on the mid-palate that plays off the nutty foundation of almonds and hazelnuts. At more than nine inches long, the Fabuloso is easily a two-hour smoke. —*Gregory Mottola*

JEFF HARRIS



97 QUAI D'ORSAY IMPERIALES (1986)

This is a spectacular, well-aged Churchill with a beautiful, brownish-red wrapper. The burn and draw are absolutely perfect. At the outset, there's a touch of light, bitter cocoa and earthiness on the front of the palate, and then as it warms up, the mid-palate turns to black pepper with a soft, smooth earthy finish. This 33-year-old cigar still has plenty of life left. —*Gordon Mott*



94 LA GLORIA CUBANA SOBERANO (CIRCA 1990)

This thick, eight-inch-long smoke was rolled in Miami, back when La Gloria Cubana was a tiny brand made in a small factory in Little Havana. The wrapper is toothy, with dots of plume, and despite being close to 30 years old, the cigar has plenty of flavor. It's rich and earthy, with notes of German chocolate, a bit of coconut and a nutty finish. A medium-bodied, pleasant taste of the past. —*David Savona*



94 PARTAGÁS PARTAGÁS DE PARTAGÁS NO. 1 (1995)

This is an old-school lonsdale, a slim and elegant smoke that is no longer part of the Partagás portfolio. The wrapper has that reddish colorado hue that's so alluring, and it has a fine draw. Floral at first, the old smoke takes some time to wake up. When it does, it has the flavor of a cup of cappuccino, creamy and rich with a smattering of cinnamon. Well made, elegant and beautifully balanced. —*David Savona*



nub
CONNECTICUT

nub
MADURO

nub
CAMEROON

nub
HABANO

nub
C I G A R

HABANO

CAMEROON

CONNECTICUT

MADURO



www.olivacigar.com

50 YEARS A FACTORY

The home of Montecristo, Romeo y Julieta and so many other brands is among the largest cigar factories in the world

You'd think the largest cigar factory in the Dominican Republic—perhaps the largest in the world—would have at least a bit of ornamentation on its façade: A series of arches to underscore importance. Columns to project power. Or maybe even decorative iron-work to show prosperity. But Tabacalera de Garcia, located just outside the Casa de Campo resort complex of La Romana, Dominican Republic, doesn't boast any particular architectural style. The exterior is as non-descript and free of affect as any building you'd find in an industrial park in the United States. If not for the sign outside the security gate, you'd have no idea that you were standing in front of one of the most important cigar operations in the world.

"Earthquakes," says Javier Elmudesi as he walks past some workers digging up a pipe outside, near a cement sidewalk. He's the industrial affairs director for this massive operation and oversees most of what goes on here, from tobacco inventory to water issues. "Little earthquakes. We just started getting them about a few months ago and they can damage the pipes. Once we lose water pressure in a part of the factory, we know a pipe has burst."

Elmudesi glances at the ditch-diggers toiling in the hot morning sun, and moves on, circling back around the side of the building to an unremarkable entrance. Is it the front of the building? The lack of design makes it difficult to tell front from back, but no matter. Elmudesi isn't trying to get Tabacalera de Garcia into the pages of *Architectural Digest*.

BY GREGORY MOTTOLA | PHOTOGRAPHS BY PETER GARRITANO





The two Javiers in the aging room—Javier Elmudesi (left) and Javier Estades—inspect finished, handmade cigars.

A special announcement from the editors of Cigar Aficionado



Dear Cigar Lover:

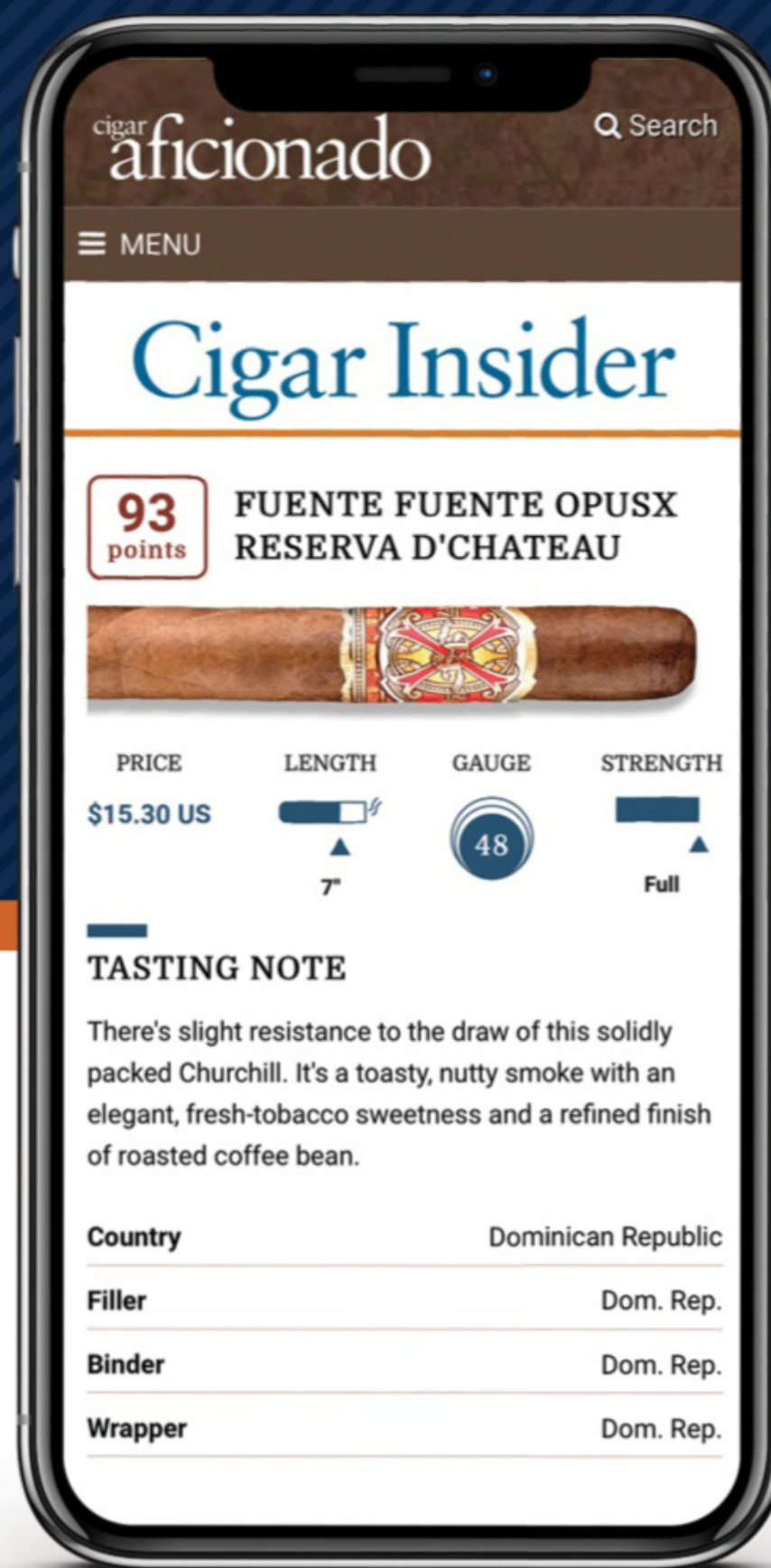
Cigar Insider, an e-newsletter from the editors of Cigar Aficionado, is brand new—beautiful design, mobile-friendly and still features cigar ratings you won't find anywhere else!

Twice a month, we'll send you:

- Vertical brand tastings—reviews of entire lines of cigars, showing you how different sizes perform.
- Helpful cigar photos illustrating size and strength.
- Previews of the top-rated cigars coming in future issues of Cigar Aficionado. Be the first to read about the best cigars.
- Interviews with intriguing cigarmakers and tobacco growers from around the world.
- News about the cigar industry.
- Ratings of rare cigars.

My best,

Marvin R. Shanken



**Take the next issue of
Cigar Insider with you on
your next cigar shopping
expedition!**

**Sign up today at
CIGARINSIDER.COM**

He's more concerned with keeping such storied brands as Montecristo and Romeo y Julieta just as relevant today as they ever were.

Inside, Elmudesi paces through a corridor past a photo of himself hanging on the wall. As far as bosses go, he definitely looks the part. He's a big guy by almost any standard, with slicked-back hair and an expression that goes from jovial to serious in an instant. Today, it's all business as he walks through another doorway, parting a curtain of clear vinyl strips that barely touch the floor. They're the type of clear strips you might see in a walk-in freezer, only these have yellowed from years of tobacco exposure. Fifty years to be precise. Tabacalera de Garcia celebrates its 50th anniversary this year, and in those five decades it has grown into the largest premium cigar factory in the Dominican Republic, and one of the largest anywhere in the world.

The air, abuzz with action, carries with it the scent of aged tobacco. If you've never smelled it, the aroma registers sweet, somewhere between honey and raisins, but each whiff is also haunted with raw undertones of vegetation and earth. And the smell here is inescapable. This factory rolls some 33 to 35 million cigars each year by hand, with rolling tables that extend back as far as the eye can see. The facility also makes cigars by machine, an operation that runs 24 hours a day, with more than one billion mass-market cigars produced here annually, most of them Backwoods. Many of the handmade cigars, about 20 million, are Montecristos and Romeo y Julietas. Other brands made here include H. Upmann, Por Larrañaga, Don Diego, VegaFina and Henry Clay. This one factory is singularly responsible for nearly 30 percent of all the handmade Dominican cigars shipped to the United States.

Making so many cigars requires an enormous, well-managed workforce. There are 5,000 people who keep Tabacalera de Garcia running, with 900 making handmade cigars alone (400 bunchers and 500 rollers who apply the wrapper). It also requires immense inventories of premium tobacco, with some \$150 million worth in storage. Much of it is grown here in the Dominican Republic, but a lot comes from all over the world: Ecuador, Mexico, Cameroon, Indonesia, Nicaragua and the United States—a veritable United Nations of tobacco leaf. The factory is the heart of cigar production for Tabacalera USA, the American arm of tobacco giant Imperial Brands PLC, of Great Britain.

"Tabacalera de Garcia combines the best of both worlds," says Javier Estades, president and chief executive officer of Tabacalera USA. "On one hand, it has managed to maintain all the tradition



The sorting room is an expansive operation where tobacco is separated by size and color.

of crafting a truly premium cigar by hand. But it has also incorporated modern processes to assure we produce outstanding cigars with the highest quality. We keep a significant inventory of tobacco giving us flexibility to age our cigars." Estades is a slim, blonde-haired Spaniard, put in charge of the U.S. operations of this company back in 2011. Under his guidance, the company has made notable changes to packaging and blends, releasing several high-scoring smokes. If there's one thing he wants to make clear, it's that staff members work together.

"I do not believe so much in functions or departments, but in teams," Estades insists. "This is especially important given our industry. Developing a cigar requires the highest level of knowledge, passion and dedication available. We use the best experts in

each area. To produce a successful cigar, it takes the ability to understand what the adult consumer demands, and then working with those experts who can make it happen."

Montecristo and Romeo have become Tabacalera de Garcia's flagship brands, and now come in myriad varieties, but this wasn't always the case. When the facility opened in 1969 it was a modest tobacco sorting operation dealing primarily in the mild Connecticut shade wrapper that was so popular at the time. The factory was owned by Gulf and Western Industries Inc. through its subsidiary, Consolidated Cigar Corp. Being the corporate conglomerate it was, Gulf and Western owned a huge portfolio of business holdings, and that included a sugar growing and processing operation in the Dominican Republic, as well as the entire Casa de Campo resort complex in La Romana. This is the same Gulf and Western that owned the famed film studio Paramount Pictures. Despite its collection of blue-chip holdings (too numerous to list), the company also invested heavily in the Dominican Republic.

The factory made its first handmade brands in 1972, Primo del Rey being one of them, followed by H. Upmann and Por Larrañaga a few years later. Back in the early '70s—a time when the Dominican Republic was not the cigar-producing powerhouse it is today—the factory was only making 500,000 cigars per year.

The timeline of Tabacalera de Garcia and its flagship brands is one of transitions, acquisitions and mergers. By the 1980s, Gulf and Western was looking to divest itself of sugar and tobacco. It pulled out of the Dominican Republic and sold Consolidated (and with it, Tabacalera de Garcia) to billionaire Ron Perelman for



\$118 million in 1984. The company was bought and sold repeatedly: In 1988 a management team bought Consolidated from Perelman for \$138 million, then in 1993 Perelman bought it back for \$188 million. Six years later, Perelman sold it to French tobacco giant SEITA for \$733 million. SEITA later merged with Spain's Tabacalera S.A., creating Altadis S.A., and Consolidated Cigar was renamed Altadis U.S.A.

Altadis, and by extension, Tabacalera de Garcia, was to change hands once again. In July 2007, British tobacco giant Imperial Brands PLC acquired Altadis S.A. for 16.2 billion euros (\$22.4 billion). This put Imperial in a unique spot, as Altadis S.A. also owned 50 percent of Cuban cigar monopoly Habanos S.A. Buying Altadis meant buying half of Habanos, placing Imperial in both the Cuban and non-Cuban sectors.

Tabacalera de Garcia started making Montes in 1984, and Romeo y Julieta arrived after the creation of Altadis.

Every area in the factory has its own ecosystem and every employee plays a vital part. In the sorting room, women separate tobacco in virtual silence, arranging each specimen by color and by size. Each leaf has a classification, and all are neatly arranged in ceremonious piles.

Contrast this to the moisturizing or “conditioning” room, a damp, foggy chamber where tobacco is piled in shaggy heaps. This is where workers, most of them men, unpack tobacco that's been aging in storage for years and revive it by running it all under hissing sprays of mist, one handful of tobacco at a time.

A flaw at any stage will show itself in the final product, and the first cigar has to perform like the 11 millionth. With a handmade product, that's easier said than done, but consistency has been the key element at Tabacalera de Garcia for five decades.

“Some things may have become more efficient over the years,” Elmudesi allows. “We keep much better records now of daily activities, but the process hasn't changed much. What has changed are the types of cigars people are smoking. So much of what we make now is full-bodied. And much thicker too.”

He picks up a thick log of a cigar off a rolling table. Plump and hefty, the cigar must be at least 60 ring gauge, maybe 70. He holds it up to make his point: “Ten years ago, we had maybe one size that was 60 ring gauge. Now, we have so many.”

The rollers here have daily quotas and you can tell by their

“Developing a cigar requires the highest level of knowledge, passion and dedication.”—Javier Estades, president of Tabacalera USA



Top: These cigars have been sorted for color consistency.
Bottom: Cigar boxes get a paint job at a separate facility nearby.

concentration that they take this task seriously—and why not? The incentives are strong. Each roller gets a base pay, but if they exceed the quota, they get more money.

The weight of Tabacalera de Garcia's reputation and its brands doesn't lie on Elmudesi's shoulders alone. He has an elite group of right-hand men with specialized knowledge of tobacco and the cigarmaking process known as the Grupo de Maestros, all of whom have spent decades in the factory: Victor Avila, who has been at Tabacalera de Garcia for 45 years, Nestor Rodriguez (40 years), Carlos Travieso (45 years)

and Pedro Ventura (22 years), who is also the manager of premium handmade operations. They are all instrumental in formulating new brands. Both Elmudesi (25 years) and Ventura report to an even larger overseer: factory manager Dr. Regine Wolfgramm. And yet, even she reports to Tabacalera de Garcia's manufacturing division. In corporate hierarchies, everyone has a boss.



These stewards of Tabacalera de Garcia ensure quality and consistency for the brands of Altadis. They stand in front of blend boxes on the factory floor. From left to right: Nestor Rodriguez, Pedro Ventura, Javier Estades, Javier Elmudesi, Rafael Nodal, Carlos Travieso and Victor Avila.

Another cast member is Yasemin Ozoncul, head of product development for cigar region. She's been with Imperial for more than a decade but moved to Tabacalera de Garcia in 2017.

And a frequent sight here is Rafael Nodal, the head of product capability for Tabacalera USA. Nodal, the dark-haired, bespectacled cigarmaker who created (and co-owns) the Aging Room cigar brand, has been tasked with creating new blends for the company, many that are rolled here.

"It is an important milestone in my career to work with the Grupo de Maestros," Nodal says. "Tabacalera de Garcia has carried out an important place in the history of premium cigars and creates blends with its unique and vast tobacco inventory."

With the confluence of teamwork, the factory continues to produce its core lines, which for many years were fairly mild and came in a few varieties. The Romeo y Julieta 1875, for example, is a staple for the factory and is the quintessential Dominican cigar in both body and character: Indonesian wrapper around an all-Dominican blend. Most likely, there will always be a market for this brand, which is mild to medium bodied. But as the company grew, and new leaders stepped in, those brands have evolved and expanded, with new blends for smokers who want stronger cigars.

Consider the full-bodied Romeo by Romeo y Julieta, a bold answer to the market's growing demand for more complexity and power. This magazine named its Piramide the No. 3 Cigar of 2012.

Montecristo is treated much the same way, with more traditional, milder lines such as the Classic and White Series, joined by stronger, more modern blends like the Monte by Montecristo:

Ecuador Habano wrapper, Dominican filler and two binders, Dominican and Nicaraguan. The Monte by Montecristo Jacopo No. 2 was named CIGAR AFICIONADO'S No. 9 cigar of 2014.

Occasionally, the factory's Grupo de Maestros will release limited-edition cigars called Private Batch, the most recent, a Dominican puro that's been aged for 10 years. Last summer the Grupo turned their attention to H. Upmann, a brand that tends to suffer from middle-child syndrome, and created the H. Upmann Grupo de Maestros Connecticut (89 points, Churchill).

So how does a cigar company celebrate 50 years? With, of course, a commemorative cigar, in this case the Montecristo Cincuenta. It comes in two formats: a 10-count box of Toros, or a 100-count humidor of box-pressed, No. 2 pirámides. The humidor is by Ellie Bleu, and the whole package retails for \$10,000, the humidor, naturally, accounting for most of the cost.

In the labyrinth of the factory, Elmudesi finds himself in the rolling gallery again. He walks over to a table and takes a finished cigar off the top to inspect it. Perhaps it's a mighty Montecristo or regal Romeo, or one of the other brands made here.

"You know, we have 300 workers here who've been with us for 20 years or more," he says with some satisfaction.

The roller, a young woman, continues to work as though he's not there. Elmudesi puts the cigar back down and then gently puts an appreciative hand on her shoulder before walking away to the next station. Without looking up, she cracks a smile, but then suppresses it and places another finished cigar on top of her rolling table. The day is almost over and there's a quota to fill. ❖



Smoking At The Hard Rock

More than 1,000 people lit up at CIGAR AFICIONADO's Big Smoke Florida

BY GREGORY MOTTOLA • PHOTOGRAPHS BY ZAK BENNETT

It's almost impossible to miss—a giant, 450-foot guitar right off the highway rising out of Hollywood, Florida's flat landscape like a curvy, rock 'n' roll colossus. That huge guitar sits on the property of the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel and Casino. It's part of the casino's \$1.5 billion expansion project and when it's finished later this year, it will be a giant, guitar-shaped hotel and perhaps the world's largest monument to rock music. But on March 23, something just as exciting came to the Hard Rock in Hollywood—CIGAR AFICIONADO's Big Smoke Florida. It's a cigar-filled evening where cigar fans get to meet the rock stars of the cigar world, and the star-power at Big Smoke celebrations is undeniable. More than 1,000 enthusiasts came to attend, from across the United States and from as far away as Australia, Romania and Canada.

"A show like this would never happen in Canada," said Joost Ueffing, who came from Halifax, Nova Scotia. José Timaros came

from Santo Domingo, the capital city of the Dominican Republic, and flew in just for the show. Timaros brought eight of his friends and is a regular attendee of Big Smoke celebrations. He purchased standard tickets, which granted entry at 6:30 pm.

"Next year, I'm going to get the V.I.P. tickets," he said. Those will get him in an hour early before the crowds.

Every CIGAR AFICIONADO Big Smoke has its own feel, vibe and personality no matter the city, though all have one thing in common—a superlative selection of cigars and a festive environment where people are given the freedom to enjoy their smokes, not to mention the rare opportunity to meet the cigarmakers who created them. And, in keeping with the Big Smoke theme, it's one of those rare times when almost every maker of premium, handmade cigars is in the same room. You're just as likely to run into cigar stars like Litto Gomez of La Flor Dominicana,



Shannon Quigley and Michael Marin enjoy their cigars and drinks outdoors in the garden-like atmosphere of the Hard Rock during the event.



University of Miami football head coach Manny Diaz at the Big Smoke with Marvin R. Shanken, editor and publisher of CIGAR AFICIONADO magazine.



Rico Cortez, Norman Bell and Clarence Watkins play a traditional game of dominoes while smoking cigars and sipping their drinks.



Care for a Bacardí Cuatro Presidente? Maybe a Bacardí Ocho Mai Tai? These were some of the swanky cocktails poured at the Big Smoke.

Ernesto Perez-Carrillo of EPC Cigar Co. and Jorge Padrón of Padrón Cigars as you are to shake hands with Rocky Patel of Rocky Patel Premium Cigars, Alan Rubin of Alec Bradley or Pete Johnson of Tatuaje.

You might see Jaime or Pepín Garcia of My Father Cigars while getting a cocktail or Cynthia Fuente-Suarez and Liana Fuente behind the Fuente booth taking photos with their devoted fans. They were all there, as were industry heavyweights like Javier Estades of Tabacalera USA, the giant company responsible for the Montecristo and Romeo y Julieta brands, and Rick Rodriguez, the ambassador for General Cigar's CAO brand.

Rafael Nodal was happy to talk about his Aging Room Nicaragua cigar and Nestor Andrés Plasencia, the tobacco grower to the stars, was there, as was Nick Melillo, Mike Giannini, Eric Newman, Juan Martínez, Abe Flores and others.

If this sounds like a giant cigar lounge where nearly every cigar star in the industry is present, it's because that's exactly what it is. Not only was everyone free to smoke inside the Hard Rock's ballroom, but there was also a beautiful, tropical-themed outdoor garden with live entertainment, more cocktail bars and even more room to relax and enjoy a cigar.

As an almost necessary complement, spirits were poured all night long, and the list included Bacardí, Bird Dog Whiskey, Calumet Farm Kentucky Bourbon Whiskey, Cardenal Mendoza, Dewar's, D'Ussé, Glengoyne, Hennessy, Grand Brulot, Santa Teresa 1796 and Tamdhu.

Bacardí brought mixology to the Big Smoke, setting up two cocktail bars where teams of capable bartenders were shaking and stirring all night long. Drinks ranged from new, modern interpretations like the Bacardí Cuatro Presidente (rum, vermouth,



Liana Fuente is happy to hand off a special Rosado Sungrown Magnum R. This particular Arturo Fuente cigar size is only available at events.



Big Smoke Florida guests were able to smoke both inside the Hard Rock's ballroom as well as outdoors, while sampling new and classic cocktails.



Kyle Farling shows off his bag of smokes along with Tracy Berryman, Richie "Riot" Otero of PDR Cigars and Ashley Sckerman.



Foundation Cigars owner Nick Melillo opens a new box of Wise Man Maduros before handing one out to an eager enthusiast at his booth.

dry Curaçao, Angostura bitters) to canonic classics like the Vesper Martini of James Bond or the simple delight of a Dewar's original highball. In the garden, Dewar's Scotch had its own pouring station, as did Hatuey Cuban-style beer. In true bacchanal style, you could drink as much as you wish.

Avid cigar smoker Steve Silvers of Tampa, Florida was heading to a music festival in Miami, but figured he'd stop in at the Big Smoke on his way.

"I've been smoking for 30 years—it's an amazing event," he said, while puffing on a CAO Flathead 660 Carb, a large, box-pressed smoke given out by General Cigar. The smoke was named No. 3 Cigar of 2015 by CIGAR AFICIONADO, with a rating of 95 points.

The cigars handed out during the evening included Aging Room, Alec Bradley, Archetype by Ventura, Arturo Fuente, Balmoral Añejo XO, CAO, El Centurion from My Father Cigars, E.P. Carrillo, Diamond Crown, H. Upmann, Hamlet Paredes, Joya de Nicaragua, Illusione Fume d'Amour, La Aroma de Cuba, La Flor Dominicana, Micallef, Montecristo, Nat Cicco, Nub, Oliva, Padrón, Plascencia Cosecha 146, PDR, Rocky Patel, Tatuaje, The Wise Man Maduro, Timeless Prestige, Undercrown and Vegas Cuban from My Father Cigars.

To make sure that all the cigars stayed in fresh smoking condition, Boveda handed out large, humidified bags capable of holding every smoke of the evening. Rabbit Air showed off some of its smoke-cleaning machines.

The food at the Hard Rock was as plentiful as the cigars and drinks. Sausages and flank steaks roasted on open-fire grills the entire evening while servers at carving stations piled up as much beef as a plate could hold. And multitiered islands of charcuterie, cheese and sliders were as artfully arranged as the deserts.

The Seminole Hard Rock is located roughly 20 minutes away from the Fort Lauderdale Airport and a half-hour from Miami International. The resort offers gambling with slot machines, table games and poker, fine and casual dining, a 4 1/2-acre, lagoon-style pool, spa and more. That evening, temperatures hovered in the high 70s.

"It's a beautiful event," said Jorge Padrón, one of the rock stars of the evening. "I hope you do it here again." ❖

The next Big Smoke takes place November 15-17 in Las Vegas. Visit TheBigSmokes.com for more information.

©2019 Altadis U.S.A. Inc.

TRINIDAD®

Honor The Spirit



SURGEON GENERAL WARNING: Cigar Smoking Can Cause Cancers Of The Mouth And Throat, Even If You Do Not Inhale.

ESPIRITU™

WWW.TRINIDADESPIRITUMUSIC.COM

Trinidadcigars_usa

Think Outside the Box

Give Him a Gift for
Father's Day
That Shows Your Good Taste



Father's Day Special: Second Gift is Free!

cigaraficionado.com/fathersday

or Call 800-752-7799

Habanos Day

Cuba brings the cigar show on the road to educate and entertain cigar lovers around the world BY GORDON MOTT

By 4 p.m. at the Cuban Embassy in Mexico City, people were lining up outside the bunker-like entrances waiting for the doors to open. The crowd continued to build throughout the afternoon and by the start of the first seminars and tastings around 5:30 there were more than 1,500 people inside, gathered for Mexico's sixth edition of Habanos Day.

Habanos Day is a celebration of Cuban cigars and rum along with tributes to Cuba's musical and artistic culture. The events have been used for a variety of celebrations, such as the launch of new limited-edition Cuban cigars, welcoming a Cuban ambassador to their new post or just providing a series of cigar tastings and seminars for appreciative fans. Handmade Cuban cigars have been paired with spirits, coffee and even chocolate, and the seminars have covered a variety of topics, everything from cigar rolling to presentations by cigar historians and tobacco experts.

The first Habanos Day took place more than 15 years ago, in Italy. That 2003 show was based on a popular French event for cigar lovers, and brought together members of Italy's top cigar clubs. Habanos S.A. seized on the idea as a way to promote Cuban cigars, and within a few years, the event had spread to both Russia and Portugal. At the fourth Habanos Day in Germany, in 2014, attendees celebrated the 84th birthday of noted cigar industry executive Heinrich Villiger, and smoked two Regional Edition cigars from Canada and Asia Pacific not usually available in Germany. In 2015, Monaco used the occasion of Habanos Day to introduce the H. Upmann Magnum 56 Edición Limitada to that market. Habanos Days have also been held in Switzerland, France, the Netherlands, Belgium, Spain, Argentina, Estonia and Costa Rica.

While most of the Habanos Days are limited to between 200 and 300 people, Mexico's Habanos Days have become a huge event, drawing more than 1,000 cigar lovers for the past several years. This year, more than 1,500 attended. The event served as the official launch of the new Mexican Regional



A happy patron holds up a hefty Montecristo Linea 1935 Leyenda at Mexico's Habanos Day.

Edition cigar, the Punch Duke, and the introduction of the new Havana Club special-edition rum, Tributo 2019. In honor of the Punch cigar's historical literary and circus themes, the embassy was decked out with brightly colored balloons, while the walls were adorned with pictures of former Cuban president Fidel Castro.



One part social and one part educational, Habanos Day also featured the release of the Punch Duke.

“Everyone who is here is a cigar lover,” said Max Gutmann, one of the original creators of the La Casa del Habano retail concept, and the principal behind IEPT, the local Habanos distributor, which bears most of the costs for the night. “Everyone always wants to learn more about Cuban cigars, the history, the way they are produced and how they are smoked and the way they mix with different drinks. You always learn something when you come here. It’s been growing every year.”

As people filed into the large event space, a room with 20-foot-high ceilings, they received a small bag containing three small Cuban cigars: a Romeo y Julieta Coronitas en Cedro, a Punch Petit Coronations and a Quintero Tubulares. There were several bars serving Havana Club products, including Selección de Maestros, a booth from accessory maker Xikar and a Cuba travel kiosk with

information about traveling to the island. While entrance to the event was free, there were small breakout sessions that required a minimal fee, from \$5 to \$15. They included a demonstration on rolling cigars and a mixology seminar to promote different drinks paired with cigars. Adargelio Garrido, the longtime lawyer for Habanos who litigated the company’s battle in the United States over the Cohiba trademark, gave a presentation about the history of the Cohiba brand. The evening’s musical act was Primera Clase, a top Cuban band.

The centerpiece of the evening was a VIP-only tasting of the new Punch Duke, paired with the new release of Tributo 2019, a limited-edition Havana Club that has presented with vintage dates since 2016. This year’s bottling was an homage to the master blenders at Havana Club, and to the art of blending with their creation of this particular rum. Only 2,500 bottles of Tributo 2019 will be released to the global market, with prices in most countries around \$400 to \$500 a bottle.

While this was the grand debut of the Duke, it’s been sold in Mexico since January. The 5 1/2 inch by 54 ring gauge cigar is the fourth Mexican Regional cigar—the first three were sold under the Edmundo Dantes label. The Duke is a medium-bodied smoke with hints of leather and earth, and while still quite young, it shows a lot of aging potential. Asbel Morales, the top master blender from Havana Club and Manolo Santiago, a Habanos Sommelier from Mexico, conducted the tasting, and the pairing of the cigar and the rum.

“We never blend a rum without thinking about the marriage it will have with cigars,” said Morales. “They are both elements of Cuban culture and they go together.”

Morales said the Havana Club blenders often debate whether to taste the rum first and then light the cigar, or vice-versa. “We decided this year that it is better to light your cigar, and then taste the rum because the cigar brings out something in the rum.”

The crowd was appreciative. “It’s a piece of Cuba in Mexico,” said George Diamandopoulos, a Mexican businessman who also owns several restaurants in the city. “For a cigar aficionado, honestly, I feel like I’m in Cuba. It’s a chance to try new cigars. It’s very hard to find anywhere in the world an experience like this, like you are in Cuba.”

“You come here because you want to learn about cigars,” said Julian Debarle, the general manager of Intercontinental Hotels in Mexico. “It’s like wine—there is always something more to learn.” ❖

HERRERA ESTELI
♦♦♦ BY DREW ESTATE ♦♦♦
From Drew Estate Master Blender, Willy Herrera

LA GRAN FABRICA DREW ESTATE
HERRERA ESTELI
NICARAGUA

DREW ESTATE MASTER BLENDER

WILLY HERRERA

AS MASTER BLENDER OF DREW ESTATE, THIS SELECTION OF CIGARS REFLECT ON THE PERSONAL JOURNEY I'VE EMBARKED ON TO CRAFT BLENDS TO SATISFY MY TASTES, MY CURIOSITIES, AND ABOVE ALL ELSE — MY CREATIVE PASSION FOR BLENDING CIGARS THAT I'M HUMBLLED TO SHARE WITH YOU. FOLLOW ME ON INSTAGRAM @HERRERAESTELI AND LEARN MORE ABOUT THE JOURNEY WE SHARE TOGETHER.
HABANO • BRAZILIAN MADURO • MIAMI • NORTEÑO



SURGEON GENERAL WARNING:
Tobacco Smoke Increases The Risk Of Lung Cancer
And Heart Disease, Even In Nonsmokers.



THE REBIRTH OF CIGARS
LA GRAN FABRICA DREW ESTATE
ESTELI, NICARAGUA
WWW.DREWESTATE.COM

moments to remember

Please send all submissions to: CIGAR AFICIONADO/Moments to Remember, Worldwide Plaza, 825 Eighth Avenue, 33rd Floor, New York, NY 10019. Or email them to: momentstoremember@mshanken.com. To order additional copies of CIGAR AFICIONADO, call 1-800-344-0763.



J.P. and Syndee Steelman of Longview, Texas, celebrate Syndee's upcoming college graduation from A&M University and her 22nd birthday at O'Neill's Pub in Dublin, Ireland, on St. Patrick's Day.



Best friends who have smoked cigars together for 25 years, Gary Johnson and father-of-the-bride Ed Paul share a fine smoke during his daughter's wedding at Tanque Verde Ranch in Tuscon, Arizona.



Radio personalities Dan Taylor and Joe Causi from WCBS 101.1 take a break from playing New York's greatest hits to discuss this year's Cigar of the Year.



Pam Minelli and her husband Richard Busto of Juniper Inlet Colony, Florida, catching some sun while on a dream cruise visiting Cuba.



Dr. Neal Bozentka, Château Mouton Rothschild managing director Philippe Dhalluin, Dr. Ken Fetter and Dr. David Bozentka enjoying Cohibas and tasting wine in Bordeaux at Château Mouton Rothschild.



Celebrating 100 years of age, WWII veteran Sgt. Raymond Navarro Sr. smokes his first cigar, a Montecristo Espada, with sons Richard, Raymond Jr. and Robert at the Broken V Ranch in Flatonia, Texas.



Frank Stallone, Ralf Möller, Steve Harvey and Daniel Marshall enjoy handmade cigars at the Beverly Hills Hotel in California.



Childhood friends from Syracuse, New York, Rich Balamut, Bob Fandrich, Stan Kloczek and Tom Baker reunite in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico, over Cohiba cigars and fine whisky.



Lifelong friends Cordell Charleston, Kyle Edwards, Dwaine Waddell and Airren Dabney catch up the best way they know how: with some fine cigars and drinks.

Where were you on 9/11?



10/10 is a powerful narrative of what terror does to the lives of four suburban New Yorkers caught in a 9/11-like attack. The thriller explores the split-second decisions made in the heat of the moment, and how the consequences of their choices destroy lives and upend our pre-conceived notions about good and evil.

– **CHRISTOPHER DICKEY**

World News Editor, The Daily Beast,
author of Our Man in Charleston

Pre-order the book now at [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)





Good friends Sharkey Haddad and Ken Gutman celebrate 20 years of smoking cigars together while cruising down Woodward Avenue in Detroit, Michigan.



Father and son Paul and Parker Pawlusiak savor Padrón cigars while enjoying some quality time together boating on Lake Lapeer in Metamora, Michigan.



Craig and Laura Smith tour Cuba using CIGAR AFICIONADO as their guide. Here, they are checking out a vintage 1953 Chevy with their driver Jose Gomez.



Tony Shoulders Sr. rings in his 60th birthday with Rhonda Bernard, Roslyn Bernard, Tony Jr., Liz Santiago and Angelique Santiago in Memphis, Tennessee.



While on vacation in Cuba, Carolyn Luis, Emily Cimino and Elizabeth Luis venture outside Havana to a tobacco farm and light up local Cuban cigars.



Steve Lucas and his son David share a special bonding moment with Montecristo cigars in Costa Rica before David leaves for U.S. Army training.



Brothers John, Owen and Eugene Bonfilio and Rowdy the dog celebrate Owen's 40th birthday with some Alec Bradley cigars in Scottsdale, Arizona.



Ryan Fournier, Jake Gagnon, Vanessa Reven and Roger Fournier Jr. make time for a smoke at a destination wedding in the Dominican Republic.



After the quail hunt, Curtis Arnold, Doug Hardman, George Arnold and Chuck Scott enjoy cigars and Port at the Rio Pedra Plantation in Georgia.

NEVER DELAY KISSING A PRETTY GIRL OR OPENING A BOTTLE OF WHISKEY

~ ERNEST HEMINGWAY

Pick your pour and we'll do the rest. With nearly two decades of experience, Selective Search is North America's leading matchmaking firm. Using our proven Meet Your Future® process, we help discerning men & women find their ideal match. Contact us today for a complimentary consultation. Isn't it time you poured two?

3,902
HAPPY COUPLES

100%
CONFIDENTIAL & OFFLINE

87%
SUCCESS RATE

SELECTIVE  SEARCH®
EXECUTIVE SEARCH MEETS PERSONAL MATCHMAKING

866.592.1200 selectivesearch.com info@selectivesearch.com



Scott Dwyer, Jamie Knowlton, Bill Tulloch, Steve Blank, Jeff Jones and Terry Linn on a ski trip to Jackson Hole, Wyoming. Cigars have always been a staple in their trips around the world.



Andrew Davis from Seattle, Washington, and Tim Hughes from Wilmington, North Carolina, enjoy some Cuban Cohibas after a long day of surfing in Playa Hermosa, Costa Rica.



Sean, Mike and Joseph Blockberger, Fred McConnell (kneeling), Dennis Guzik, Bob and Sam Dixon, Rick Reese, Lou Marshal and Dave Bliss at the Invitational Pub Inspection & Survey in London.

Bombay Tobak
MBOMBAY / GAAJA / MQBA
WWW.BOMBAYTOBAK.COM



Paul Santili from Chicago, Illinois, lights a Cuban Romeo y Julieta cigar as he takes in the view from the Great Wall of China.



Jim Peterson drove all the way from Massachusetts to Epping, New Hampshire, just to meet Ernesto Perez-Carrillo.



After their 18th annual Labor Day seafood party, the Wilkocz family slipped on their vintage smoking jackets and extended the celebration with My Father cigars in Jamison, Pennsylvania.



Jude Torchia of Denver Colorado enjoys a Padrón 1964 Anniversary Series cigar on the porch with his loyal companion, Bella.



Nick and Nikki Zaglifa share their first cigar moment as husband and wife in Paradise Valley, Arizona.



A LEGEND AMONG LANDMARKS

A standard for cigar aficionados for over 20 years, Shelly's Back Room is a comfortable, yet still elegant, retreat in which to enjoy fine cigars and choose from a distinguished assortment of single malt and blended whiskies.

Lunch, dinner and late-night menus offer the perfect complement to your cigar smoking pleasure.

A new, state-of-the-art continuous fresh air system will make your visit to Washington's best cigar tavern even better!

Shelly's Back Room

1331 F. Street NW • Washington, D.C.
202.737.3003 • SHELLYSBACKROOM.COM





Clean Air Defined

*Official air purifier of the
International Premium
Cigar & Pipe Retailers (IPCPR)*



*Effective . Quiet . Stylish
Air Purifiers*

For a free catalog call
888.866.8862
www.rabbitair.com/smoke



Ted Creighton, Marshall Mosesson, Parimal Upadhyay, Tom Taylor, Brian Salay, Neil Spence, Frank Gilanelli and Larry Scharf sip some suds with their smokes in Westhampton, New Jersey.



Roy Azanzamendi, Anthony Falce, Steph Colon, Gyvis Santos, Mario Aviles, Orlando Rivera, Dominick D'Angelo and Elias Rosa gather in Brooklyn, New York, for Anthony's birthday.



What's a good smoke without some great reading material? Bill Sirny and Scott Briley enjoy Montecristo cigars at Casa de Montecristo in Mooresville, North Carolina.



Tony Tress, Mike Waddington, Richard Bowen, Reggie Gray, Mark Pollock, Josh Wheelock and Dave Jericho celebrate Josh's 30th birthday in Tampa, Florida.



Cigar collectors Amir Saarony from Canada and James Wu from Hong Kong smoke with Gordon Mott and David Savona at the Meliá Cohiba in Havana.



Dr. Nekita Fuller, Kalif Fuller, Andre Fuller and Randy Fuller sport some elegant smoking jackets for New Year's Eve in Overland Park, Kansas.



John and Jack Sadowski spend some quality father-son time while enjoying locally made Rodriguez Cigars in Key West, Florida.



Retired officers Jim Fortier, Nancy Delgado, Ken Ward and David McCall at the 888 Cigar Lounge in Fullerton, California, on Police Officer Appreciation Day.



Sharon and Peter Daly pregameing the Daytona 500 NASCAR Race with a few cigars during their trip to Daytona Beach, Florida.

CIGAR AFICIONADO (ISSN #1063-7885) is published bimonthly by M. Shanken Communications, Inc., Worldwide Plaza, 825 Eighth Avenue, 33rd floor, New York, NY 10019. (212) 684-4224. Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Address changes and subscription inquiries: CIGAR AFICIONADO, P.O. Box 37367 Boone, IA 50037-0367; call 1-800-365-4929; or email cgacustserv@cdsfulfillment.com. Subscription rates: United States, \$24.95 per year; Canada, \$38.00 per year; all other foreign, \$56.00. Subscriptions are payable in U.S. funds. TO ORDER A NEW SUBSCRIPTION, call 1-800-992-2442, email cgacustserv@cdsfulfillment.com, or write to aforementioned Boone address. To order back issues, call 1-800-761-4099. Unsolicited manuscripts will not be returned, and no responsibility can be assumed for such material. All "Letters to the Editor" should be sent to the editor at the aforementioned New York address. All rights in letters sent to CIGAR AFICIONADO will be treated as unconditionally assigned for publication and copyright purposes and subject to CIGAR AFICIONADO's unrestricted right to edit. CIGAR AFICIONADO® is a registered trademark of M. Shanken Communications, Inc. All rights reserved. Nothing may be reprinted or reproduced in whole or in part without written permission from the publisher. Copyright © 2019, M. Shanken Communications, Inc. To sell CIGAR AFICIONADO call: 1-800-344-0763.



made for you



In a world of fast food and one-size-fits-all sensibilities, how often does something feel made especially for you? The “Made for You” section celebrates those items that are created with such high quality of hand workmanship and degree of customization that they become individual to you. In each issue, our editors will endeavor to bring you special things from anywhere on the globe, choosing them solely on the basis of outstanding quality. Our goal is to give you guidance on the best of everything.

1 SMOKES AFLOAT—METRICA NORTH AMERICA

So you’ve finally realized your lifelong dream of buying a super yacht and now you’re wondering how to reconcile it with your other great passion: cigars. Metrica North America, the maker of bespoke, nautical furnishings, has you covered with its Reposo Column Nautic humidor. The brushed-steel base can be anchored, so your smokes aren’t tossed about in the high seas. Features include self-monitoring, UVC sterilization and remote control via smartphone. metrica.de/en/

2 PIZZA COMES HOME—BREVILLE

When the dream is home-baked pizza, the hitch is hitting the high temps available in professional ovens. Breville’s Pizzaiolo Pizza Oven delivers with 750°F, enough heat for the now trendy Neapolitan pie. The unit takes up the counter space of about two toaster ovens and is easy to use. Just turn the style dial to pick presets like MARGHERITA, NEW YORK, THIN AND CRISPY and FROZEN modes. After preheating, 12-inch pizzas will cook in about two minutes. You can even use the oven to char vegetables. breville.com

3 TEA-ING IT UP—TEA FORTÉ

Thinking about getting into tea drinking, but not sure how to approach it? Tea Forté, an importer of leafy brews from around the world, packages sampler sets that show the way. Our favorite is the collection of Assam black teas with the manly name Noir. It’s meant as a gateway for coffee drinkers into the dark side of tea. The company also sells equipment like steeping cups for those who like loose leaf and offers packages designed for Mother’s Day. teaforté.com

4 FIT TO BE TIED—WHISKERS LACES

Men looking to add a pop of color to their outfits have typically turned to ties, pocket squares and socks. But one company offers a new alternative: shoelaces. Whiskers Laces combine vibrant colors and more than 70 innovative designs to offer laces that complement any dress shoe or boot. Each shoelace comes in an easy-to-wrap wooden spool and is equipped with a premium metal aglet to prevent fraying. Available in boxes of five from \$15 to \$60. whiskerslaces.com

5 OUT OF THE PARK—SHOWBELTS

What sets baseball uniforms apart from other sports is the belts that bring the classy look together. Showbelts, by Nokona, the maker of baseball mitts, offers the same style to those who have left the diamond behind. Made with the company’s glove leather, the belts are fully customizable from length and type of leather to color and buckle type. You can even choose the threading and the keeper, as well as the lining and edging. And if you’re still playing—or even if not—you can personalize your belt with a number. showbelts.com

6 SOUND CONTROL—ZVOX AUDIO

You’re in a crowded cigar bar trying to chat up a smoking lady in an end-of-the-world cocktail dress, but the clamoring gang at the next booth is drowning out your dialogue. Luckily, you have the VoiceBud VB20, a personal hearing device that tucks behind your ear and allows you to discretely and wirelessly control volume with an app on your smartphone. The NoiseBlocker technology cuts out the voices behind you and other features drown out the sound of the humming smoke filter and any sudden peaks in volume—in case a fight breaks out. zvox.com

EST. 1939



CANADA

BOLD START.
VELVET FINISH.



Crown Royal
BLACK

PLEASE DRINK RESPONSIBLY.

CROWN ROYAL BLACK Blended Canadian Whisky. 45% Alc/Vol. The Crown Royal Company, Norwalk, CT.

MAYBE YOUR NEXT BOURBON SHOULD BE A TEQUILA.

Gran Patrón Piedra is crafted using the highest-quality 100% Weber Blue Agave and aged for up to four years in American and French oak barrels. It's this intricate process that delivers a rich and impeccably balanced taste with notes of wood and dried fruits. Bourbon drinkers, your tequila has arrived.



SIMPLY PERFECT.®
granpatron.com

The perfect way to enjoy Patrón is responsibly. ©2019 Patrón tequila. The Patrón logo and Patrón bee logo are trademarks. Imported by The Patrón Spirits Company, Las Vegas, NV. Tequila – 40% alc. by vol.